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The Magazine

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COVER: The MUMMY'S CURSE (1944), THE RETURN OF DRACULA (1958)



# Scarlet Letters



juggernaut coming to continental Europe to engage the Teutonic one and both destroyed by greater apocalyptic forces stirred up by their epic but senseless struggle. The mood of time and place and impending doom is as good, or better, in this film as in the best of Hammer, and all created by Roy William Neill, who Ken Hanke—and bless him for everything else he writes—observes, "... seemed curiously remote once the plot got underway." Hmm.

2. Suspense. Teeth-clenching, gut-twisting, bladder-weakening suspense is created by sequences in films where an omnipotent death/destruction is in control and lurking in the midst of great crowds of people whose preoccupations with enjoying the moment make them unaware of its presence. PHANTOM OF THE OPERA, BLACK ORPHEUS, and MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH immediately come to mind, and the "New Wine Festival" sequence in FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN compares favorably with those. In the hands of a lesser director than Neill, this sequence could have been just another sappy, incongruous, irrelevant musical interlude, but crosscut as it is with the conversation between Chaney and Ilona Massey, and Chaney's explosive reaction to the pressure—what Ken Hanke calls "self-pitying" and "downright morbid"—makes it not only justified but integral.

3. Timelessness—made so by a great ensemble of secondary actors. Chaney may not have been the most compelling actor, but Universal had to go with what it had available. All things considered, Chaney didn't do all that bad in this film, but—and don't laugh—but close your eyes for a minute and consider what it might have been had an actor with the brooding vitality of Olivier played the lead. I wonder how many critical punches would have been thrown at the same dialogue, the same direction, the same structure? But we still have Lionel Atwill and his practiced bonhomie; Madame Ouspenskaya and her weathered, stoic omniscience; a dash of Dwight Frye and his whiny edginess; a dollop of Dennis Hoey—Inspector Lestrade himself; Lugosi, the only guy who still pronounces his "w's" like "v's" when he has nothing more to do than growl; and, above all, Ilona Massey—one classy lady, that one, gang, and too fine to go slumming with either Chaney or even

Once again, I feel compelled to sing the praises of your latest effort, *Scarlet Street* #34 is a joy to read, especially Ken Hanke's featured article on the "House" pictures and the accompanying interviews by Chris Pustorino, Tom Amorosi, and Richard Valley. It's high time HOUSE OF DRACULA received some serious attention. As Ken points out, it far outclasses most of the later Universals in terms of solid storytelling and overall atmosphere. Onslow Stevens, too, has seldom been recognized for his memorable portrayal of Dr. Edelmann. Thanks to Ken for trying to correct this oversight.

Being a dedicated fan of the *film noir*, I have been following with interest your ongoing series of minireviews. In this particular group, I cannot allow to go unchallenged Michael Spampinato's assertion that *CRISS CROSS* lacks passion. What is it that motivates all the action in the film if not Steve Thompson's passion for his ex-wife, Anna? From their furtive embrace in a nightclub parking lot at the beginning of the film to their deadly embrace at its climax, Steve is at the mercy of this all-consuming passion. His motive for proposing the armored car robbery is at first unclear: he and Anna are caught in a compromising situation and he seems to be merely inventing a reason for their meeting. (Anna's new husband, the ruthless Slim Dundee, has already been revealed as an abuser and a sadist.) It's just as possible, though, that he's been thinking of a way to escape with his beloved and the robbery, provided no one gets hurt, seems like a good plan.

Granted, neither character is especially bright, and in the grip of powerful emotions their judgments may be clouded, but they certainly do not lack passion—nor does the film as a whole.

John Skillin  
jskillin@infolink.org

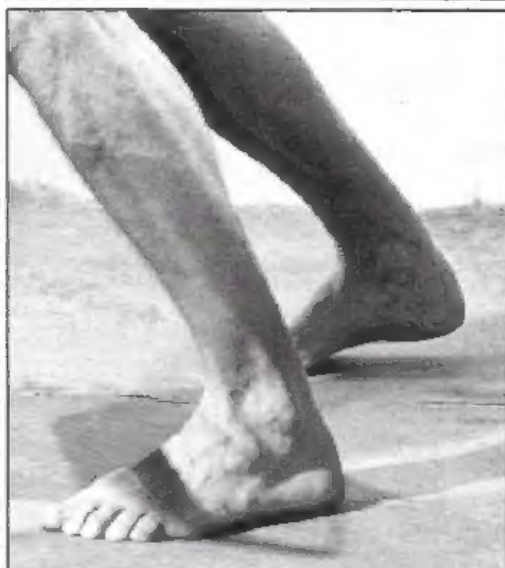
In the article *HOUSE PARTY*, that reading-writing-researching-reviewing dynamo of yours, Ken Hanke, has produced another *Scarlet Street* center/masterpiece that defines the very essence of the magazine. Having said that, though, I must say further that I was quite surprised, disappointed—I think "vexed" is the proper word—to find that he aligns himself with those critics who have routinely trashed *FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN* throughout the 40 years since I first saw it. That film seems to be one of the favorite whipping boys of those critics, a flea-ridden dog to be maliciously kicked whenever its existence is brought to attention. It's like the loser sitting forlornly exposed in the dunking booth on the carnival midway: "All right, folks, step right up and take yer shots—only three fer a quarter!"

Now I've seen that movie three, maybe four times in my life, and since, like you, Mr. Editor, I'm on the cusp of 50 and don't give a damn any more what anyone thinks, I'm going to draw a line in the sand and defend that film—praise it, even. In fact, I think it's a razor's breadth ahead of *SON OF FRANKENSTEIN* as the best of Universal's second wave of horror films. I'm really tired of the critics taking potshots and by extension denigrating my taste. I feel that I'm the only one who ever found merit in it (well, not quite—Leonard Maltin gave it three stars), but that's gonna change.

Yes, Lugosi is miscast, but he's only on screen for a few minutes at best, in heavy makeup, so what difference does that make? The ending seems hurried and cut, too many strings left hanging with the secondary characters, but consider these points:

1. Atmosphere. Grave robbers, gypsies, peasants frolicking in traditional costumes, long journeys by primitive two-wheeled cart, brooding music perhaps not original but never better utilized, a sense of apocalyptic doom all around, the inevitability of fate and the inability and futility of escaping it, all taking place in a kind of central European time warp, a Ruritania never-never land in the happy, colorful years before the cataclysm of World War I broke. In fact, I've seen farther reaches than for me to call that film a metaphor for World War I—the British

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Lex Barker's

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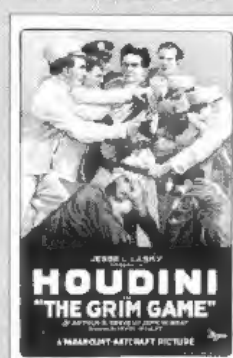


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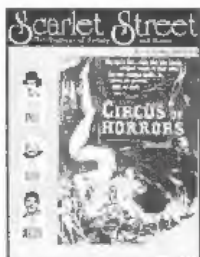
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Gosh! Wow! Boy, oh boy! *Scarlet Street* has taken a quantum jump into the lead among imagi-movie magazines!

**Forrest J Ackerman**

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***Film Review***



## SCARLET LETTERS

*Continued from page 4*

Patric Knowles. But again, think of her paired off in this film with Olivier in his prime. This, people, is the CASABLANCA of horror movies—at least the B ones, and that includes the Lewtons.

Well, that's it. Hell, that was easy enough. I also like HORROR ISLAND, despite everything, but not on the same level to feel that it would be worthwhile defending it and yet... just who was that bit actor guy Foy Van Dolsen anyway?

Mark Angelcyk

Kewanee, Illinois

Ken Hanke replies: I should first thank Mark for his kind words about my efforts within the pages of *Scarlet Street*—so thank you, Mark. I will also concede that he makes a pretty convincing case for the qualities of *FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN*—almost to the point of having me accept his view. The only problem: I know that, if I were to watch the film, I'd still find it—Lugosi's interesting if flawed take on the Monster aside—most awfully tedious from a personal standpoint. It's a film I have tried to like for as long as I can remember and have just never succeeded in doing. However, if Mark would really like to make a case for the charms of *HORROR ISLAND*, that's a cause I could get behind, especially if he can find out just who the hell Foy Van Dolsen is...

I'm so pleased to see Lelia Loban back in the pages of *Scarlet Street*, first with her typically thoughtful and insightful take on *CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF* in *SS* #33 and now with her contributions to the film noir series in #34.

*SS* has the best writers, no contest, and Ms. Loban is one of the brightest lights—casting the most intriguing shadows—on your thoroughfare!

Harry Marich

Chicago, IL

As one of the editors of *Film Score Monthly*, I just can't let a comment like the one in Michael D. Walker's review of WB's laserdisc of *THE ILLUSTRATED MAN* pass uncomplemented upon. Walker states that "... Jerry Goldsmith fans will detect a few musical cues in the soundtrack which he borrows from his own *PLANET OF THE APES* score of a year earlier." In fact, while some of *THE ILLUSTRATED MAN* is written in the same style (i.e. serialism) as *PLANET OF THE APES*, there are certainly no "borrowed" musical cues in the score. *THE ILLUSTRATED MAN* is, in its way, the equal of Goldsmith's *PLANET OF THE APES* in terms of its experimentation and effectiveness and remains one of Goldsmith's finest works—it's a brilliant collision of serialism and impressionism. Labeling it a rehash in this offhand manner does both Goldsmith and the score a great disservice.

Jeff Bond

Managing Editor

*Film Score Monthly*

Michael D. Walker replies: Your comments are well-taken, Jeff. I meant no disservice to Mr. Goldsmith or his brilliant scores. In fact, your assessment of it mirrors my own, as I find it a terrific complement to the *APES* soundtrack. Had I the advantage of more space I would've elaborated on the similarities, in particular an eight-note bass motif from *APES* that appears in the climax of *THE ILLUSTRATED MAN*. I used "borrowed" in lieu of "to introduce from another source" and regret that you mistook it to mean "rehashed," as it certainly isn't that. Thanks for your insights!

One of the finest pieces of journalism I have ever read appears in Issue #33 of *Scarlet Street*: *UNDER A NEW LIGHT—WEREWOLF OF LONDON*, by Ken Hanke. Fantastic! Marvelous! As for *Scarlet Street* itself, if it was for everyone it would probably be as dull and boring as most other mags.

It is not dull! Keep up the good work, Ken Hanke, and *SS*—keep printing great issues! Congratulations!

Jimmy Robinson

Hartselle, AL

I really enjoyed *Scarlet Street* #33. Ken Hanke's piece on *WEREWOLF OF LONDON* is, without question, the best I've ever read on this unsung classic. When I first took note of the theme of Richard Valley's piece on the relationship between Glendon and Renwick, I had my doubts. But after reading it, I see the point quite clearly. Very clever and well written. Keep up the fantastic work!

John Brunas

Palisades Park, NJ

Considerable praise, indeed, coming from one of the authors of the seminal *Universal Horrors!* (McFarland and Company, 1990). Thank, John!

I've been an avid *Scarlet Street* reader since Issue #4, and, upon realizing that I have never once written a letter to applaud your efforts, felt maybe the time was right to do so. I just finished *SS* #33 and am sitting here with a full belly—rarely have I enjoyed an issue more.

I particularly enjoyed the *WEREWOLF OF LONDON* pieces, a film that really opens itself to endless analysis. I wholeheartedly concur with Richard Valley's *WITH PLENTY OF MONEY AND HUGH* article—for years and years I have had the distinct impression that the Renwick/Glendon relationship had a strong underlying gay subtext, but rarely heard others approach it from that particular angle. Often I've compared *Scarlet Street*'s somewhat forthright "agenda" to Bill Dale Marcinko's excellent but tragically short-lived *Crow* magazine ("All these films have a strong hidden gay subtext—you just didn't

*Continued on page 9*

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# Frankly Scarlet



Some months ago, a film called *PLAYING BY HEART*, winningly directed by Willard Carroll, opened to some very favorable reviews and then vanished almost overnight. Surprising, that, because the cast included such top-drawer veteran actors as Sean Connery, Ellen Burstyn, Dennis Quaid, Gena Rowlands, and Madeleine Stowe, and such super-hot newcomers as Ryan Phillippe (pictured with director Carroll, who was nonplussed when the actor showed up for filming with blue hair), Gillian Anderson, Jon Stewart, and Angelina Jolie (pictured with Phillippe).

The movie also featured, in a brilliant cameo appearance, another relative newcomer to the great motion picture screen: *Scarlet Street: The Magazine of Mystery and Horror*.

That's right: in a scene set in a book store and featuring Anderson and Stewart, *Scarlet Street* was clearly seen (we were ready for our closeup, Mr. DeMille) in the hands of a sales clerk named Bosco.

Happily, the film seems to have found its audience on home video, where its intimate comedy and drama has proven ideal for the small screen. How do we know it's found its audience? Well, one small indication is the increased number of *Scarlet Streeters* who have written or come over to our tables at conventions to tell us they saw *Scarlet Street* in a great little movie just the other night.

We're happy for Willard Carroll and all involved, actually, because it is a "great little movie" (little in only the best sense of the word, meaning nothing blows up during the entire course of the story) and it fully deserves to be seen. Check it out the next time you drop by your local video store.

\*\*\*

Way way way back in *Scarlet Street* #4, we ran a terrific piece by John Brunas on what is, in my opinion, one of the best B horror movies of the fifties: *THE RETURN OF DRACULA*. I always wanted to do something more on this film, and we set about getting interviews with its stars: Francis Lederer, Norma Eberhardt, and Ray Stricklyn. You'll find them all in this issue, along with an expanded (by me) version of John's original article.



Since only 1,000 copies were printed of *Scarlet Street* #4, and since it now sells for upwards of 100 bucks, I don't think too many of you ever witnessed its initial appearance. Enjoy, and I'll see you next issue....

Richard Valley

## SCARLET LETTERS

Continued from page 8

know it until I pointed it out"), but this article quashed that impression. I think that one of the most refreshing things about *SS* has been your ability to provide a fresh critical perspective on older films that many people may not have looked at as closely. My hat is off to you all.

Anyway, just a note to let you know that I certainly appreciate your efforts and to applaud you for yet another fine issue. By the way, don't ever lose Tony Strauss as a reviewer—his summations of *DAUGHTERS OF DARKNESS* and *BEYOND THE VALLEY OF THE DOLLS* are among the most entertaining I've ever read. Thanx again, and keep it coming!

Barry "The Evil Twin" Wooldridge  
Hurricane, WV

Thanx for the accolades, *Evil Twin*. Rest assured that, not unlike Charles Starrett in *MASK OF FU MANCHU*, Tony Strauss has been stripped and chained in the dungeon, where he is hard at work writing reviews and preparing his first feature article for *Scarlet Street*. (It gets so annoying when he begs us to make the chains tighter, but hey, we're willing to make sacrifices. Blood sacrifices.)

I have just seen the notice in *Video Business* magazine that Universal has seen fit to alter the Lugosi *DRACULA* with a score by "minimalist composer" Philip Glass. No one who has seen Errol Morris' *THIN BLUE LINE* can fail to appreciate this great composer's gifts to enhance films. Yet I can't help but feel that something is being lost and not gained, since this is the version Universal is commit-

ting to DVD. I have mixed feelings. I would like to see the classic remain viable, the way *KING KONG* and *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN* have become. Glass says that, while there have been many *DRACULA* films since 1931, "none are equal to the original in eloquence or the sheer power to move us." His heart is obviously in the right place. Yet... yet... I liked the Browning version's own symphony of wind and bats and that wonderful old *SWAN LAKE* theme. I turn 50 as this happens. Now I know what FJA was talking about all these years: "If only we'd seen it the way it was." I'd hoped the video age would preserve what was precious, not trick it out to suit new fancies. Then, too, try listening to *NOSFERATU* using Walter Wendy Carlos' "Winter." I guess I'll give Philip a shot.

Farnham Scott  
Sunnyside, NY

Say, don't you mean Glass a shot? Or possibly a shot Glass? In any event, Farnham, you'll be able to watch *DRACULA* on DVD with or without the Glass score.

I cannot get over the consistent high quality of *Scarlet Street*! The film analyses and interview with Nina Foch in Issue #33 were terrific! I enjoy the fact that *SS* feels free to pursue taboo subjects when they naturally arise (as, say, a consequence of analysis or inquiry), but equally free not to if they do not. In other words, though *SS* is neither "gay" nor "straight," it is both naughty and nice! (In this and other respects, *SS* reminds me of Disney.)

Speaking of this issue, I recall that at the age of seven, in the summer of '63, I

had admonished a friend not to travel too much farther down the strand upon which we'd been a-roaming. "You are a fool," I cried. "But without fools," he replied, "there would be no wisdom!" It seems *WEREWOLF OF LONDON* was running all that week on *MILLION DOLLAR MOVIE* in NYC, and thanks to the same, my friend and I were learning how people were supposed to converse with one another!

In #33, I also appreciated that wonderful photograph of little, befanged Leon Carido clutching at the bars of his bedroom window. Terence Fisher was able to capture so many exhilarating images in his films for Hammer, not least in *CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF*. The photographs of Richard Wordsworth's dog-man, of Leon steadied by both the bars on his window and the loving, concerned presence of Don Alfredo, and of the beautifully-conceived adult (and very human) werewolf effectively invite the prospective viewer to dream of visual narratives fraught with promise. Stills from many of the early Hammer pictures (*HORROR*, *BRIDES*, *HOUD*) tease one's imagination far more successfully than the grotesque movie trailers we must endure in the nineties.

The interview with Ms. Foch was delightful. I can imagine few things more intoxicating than the notion of being stalked through dark corridors by Ms. Foch in high heels—then or now!

Soon I should be subscribing to your mag; in addition to the articles I men-

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# ALTERNATIVE CINEMA

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## SCARLET LETTERS

*Continued from page 9*

tioned, I loved Farry Ackerman's extended CRIMSON CHRONICLES. To me, *Scarlet Street* is the one legitimate heir to the *FM* I devoured in my youth.

David Wilke

University of Kentucky  
UKCC.uky.edu

I very much enjoyed Ken Hanke's article PARAMOUNT HORRORS (SS #32), but I was surprised Ken didn't mention Karl Struss, the cinematographer who was partially responsible for the success of three of the movies mentioned.

For DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE, Struss was nominated for an Academy Award and was responsible for the innovative filter process used for the transformation of Jekyll into Hyde.

Fulvio Amodeo  
Boston, MA

What happened to the second half of the article on Paramount Horrors—the forties? Please don't forget about it, as the first installment was so wonderful! I collect movies on tape and did not know TERROR ABOARD still might exist to view. I hope some wise distributor (namely Universal, since I believe they would now own the film) puts it and THE WITCHING HOUR out for home purchase. How about a nice filmbook article on THE WOLF MAN? Your pieces on THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF and

WEREWOLF OF LONDON were much fun. As to speculating whether Dr. Glen-don "went to our church," it might account for his being so neat as to put his hat, coat, and scarf on to go a-prowling. I adore your magazine and think that whatever your "agenda" is, you are the finest serious nostalgia/fandom-type magazine in the business!

Joseph Parra

gzila@webtv.net

*Our agenda has always been to put out the best magazine possible for all people of every persuasion and we're very gratified that you think we're succeeding. And don't worry: the second half of the Paramount piece is coming up soon.*

Disney's new Tarzan movie will be shown in a few days, and I've got to confess that I go ape over Lex Barker. Definitely the handsomest, sexiest, and best of all Tarzans. I just hope you would use his gorgeous profile as your future cover.

There are probably over 20 actors to play the Lord of the Jungle. Only a few worth mention: Lex Barker, Gordon Scott, Johnny Weissmuller, Buster Crabbe, and Mike Henry. Given the same producer (Sol Lesser) in low-budget Tarzan films to compare with Johnny, Lex, and Gordon, we fans can definitely see that Lex Barker is really the best of all Tarzans with a lovely physique to match his good looks. He is poised. Has a good, authoritative voice. Sometimes looks very gentle. Sometimes has animal magnetism.

So please, have my most favorite Tarzan, Lex Barker, make your magazine cover and have many, many, many priceless photos of this greatest Tarzan appear in your magazine, including shots with his feet.

A Tarzan Fan

San Francisco, CA

*Oh, dear, dear, dear . . .*

Praise Allah for *Scarlet Street*! What a delicious breath of fresh air to read a magazine with writers who are capable of being amusing without ever being condescending smart-asses. I like a writing style that's breezy, but it can be very unpleasant when the breeze is coming from the wrong direction. *Scarlet Street* is consistently refreshing!

Joyce Zizmor

Baltimore, MD

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Gosh, fellas, there's only one thing worries me—when I get Lou's brain, will I still be smart enough to read *Scarlet Street*?

Yes, kids, it's the *Scarlet Street* Slightly Mangled Special. We have in our vaults some issues with minor defects: price tags glued on the covers, a folded page, a gypsy curse scrawled on the classifieds . . . nothing too grim, but enough to render them unsuitable for sale at the usual rate.

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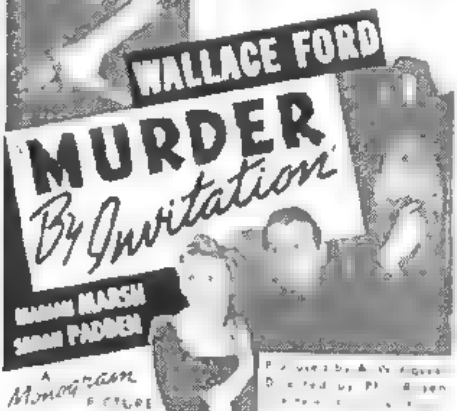
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**MURDER BY INVITATION\*** (1941 Monogram) Wallace Ford, Marion Marsh, Sara Padden, Dave O'Brien, Minerva Urecal. A forgotten horror film surfaces. Don't be fooled by the "B crime film" sounding title. This is a full fledged old dark house horror chiller with all the trimmings: a mysterious hooded killer, secret panels, screams in the night, faces peering through windows, sinister shadows etc. The plot concerns a midnight meeting at an eerie country estate. A rich, eccentric old lady has gathered her no-good relatives to tell them how she's distributing the money in her will. But do you know it, the relatives are being bumped off by a hooded maniac. Who's the knife-wielding madman? Ford and Marsh attempt to find out. It's odd the horror film researchers have overlooked this as long as they have. It's definitely in the style of all 1940s Monogram horror films. The only thing missing is Bela Lugosi. VERY similar to Universal's *The Black Cat* also from the same year. Recommended. 16mm H288

**13 DAYS TO DIE\*** 1965 Thomas Alder, Peter Cerasi, Chira Raitana, Horst Frank. Here's a neat piece of intrigue laced with bizarre and exotic settings, including an ancient lost city filled with ancient stone dolls and crumbling temples. The plot involves a priceless black ruby and a master criminal's demand for 3 million dollars for its return. It seems everyone who wears the elusive ruby eventually dies. What strange power does the ruby hold? In one riveting scene, the heroine is tied to the ceiling and the spiders plunge down onto her writhing body. What a horror! The spider scenes involving calypso that are used for firing men into a pool is bloodthirsty crocodiles! Great fun. From 16mm SP40

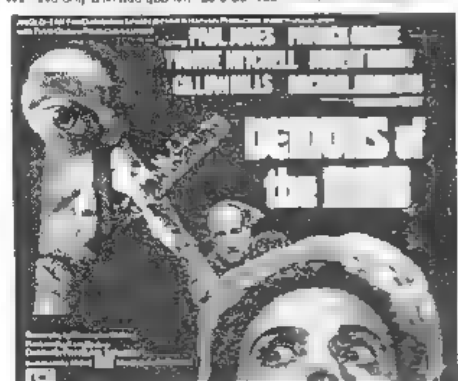
**IT TAKES A THIEF\*** (1950) Jayne Mansfield, Anthony Quayle, Carl Mohner, Edward Judd. This is one heist/crime film, one of the best we have. Quayle is suckered into being the transport man for a big heist by the stunning Mansfield and the gang. He's harassed by Scotland Yard after hiding the money, but takes the bait of its location without a second thought. Mansfield and her henchmen have betrayed him. Years after being freed from prison, he sets out to retrieve the loot, but Jayne's hoodlum friends are close at hand. Lots of excitement and intrigue follow. One nail-biting scene has one of the crooks inducing Jayne's young son to play chicken on the railroad tracks. Mansfield has seldom looked more beautiful and her acting is terrific, showing that she could play a more than just a dumb blonde. A thoroughly intense suspense/thriller complemented by superb performances. There are a lot of great films in this year's bumper crop. This might be the best of the bunch. \$12.95 plus \$2.35 for packaging, handling, and postage. 16mm M297

**SOS PACIFIC\*** (1958) Eddie Constantine, Richard Attenborough, E. J. Barton, Pini Argon, Eugene Alphonse. This is the best Constantine film. Eddie is a tough sailor who's being flown back to the mainland for trial. Also on board is the sleazy snake who lured him in, played to the hilt by Attenborough. The plane is filled with many colorful characters: a shifty son-of-a-bitch, a pretty girl, etc. During the flight, a fire starts, ruining the plot. Eddie is forced to land the plane near a remote island. After a hard landing, the plane sinks and the survivors head for shore. Here they discover a hidden treasure, a giant sea monster with cameras inside pointing into a small rocky point on which sits the tell-tale tower of an atom bomb. The entire island will be blown to smithereens in a few hours! They don't make them much better than this. Wow. Shot in English. Yeah! You'll hear Eddie's real voice (he's good). Our highest recommendation. \$2.95 plus \$2.05 for packaging, handling, and postage. 16mm AA21

**M STRESS OF ATLANTIS\*** (1942 aka L ATLANTIDE) Brigitte Helm, Jean Angelo, Pierre Blanchard, Georges Tourne. Some call this an awful film, many others call it brilliant, but no matter how you slice it, this is a unique film in the Sinister library. Two soldiers, exploring the Sahara in search of Atlantis, are captured by raiders from the lost city. They are taken before its beautiful queen who has over 50 mutilated soldiers. Much that follows seems like an endless nightmare, culminating in the murder of one of the soldiers. There are some brilliant moments in this sci-fi fantasy classic. The use of light and shadow is outstanding. Watch for some great close-ups (Helm is stunning). The script contains a number of sardonic moments. Very memorable and highly recommended. NOTE: This video master is from an outside source and is noticeably softer than our usual product. While not up to our normal standards, we feel it's quite acceptable. We believe it's important to make this rare gem available. \$9.17



**DEMONS OF THE MIND** 1971 Hammer, Paul Jones, Robert Harvey, Patrick Magee. One of the best horror films of the 1970s. A 19th century Bavarian innkeeper is haunted by a legendary demon that supposedly kills its victims. A nearby castle, a deranged count keeps his beautiful daughter and her because he thinks they're possessed. A doctor comes in to unlock the dread family secret. The film is a horrifying tale of incest, madness and murder. It's a masterpiece of horror, with great performances. Recommended. NO. 1. \$12.95 plus \$2.35 for packaging, handling, and postage. 16mm H272



**EAST OF BORNED\*** 1961 Universal, Charles Royster, Mike Hough, Georges Renner, Robert Royster. We've said it before, but we'll say it again. This is the best film we've ever made. It's a masterpiece of horror, with great performances. Recommended. NO. 1. \$12.95 plus \$2.35 for packaging, handling, and postage. 16mm H272

**DR. Jekyll and MR. Hyde\*** (1955) Michael Rennie, Sr. Cedric Hardwicke, Mary Gordon, John Hoyt, Mary Ly, John Harkness. Adopted for TV by Gene Vincent. This may be the best horror film of the year. It's a one-hour episode of the old CULMAX TV series, complete with original commercials, hosted by Bill Lundigan. Rennie is excellent in the title role of the R. Stevenson horror classic. Hardwicke and Gordon also shine in support. It's amazing how well Rennie is as Jekyll. The scenes from Jekyll into Hyde come off terrific. The film was originally broadcast live. Anyone who was worried about a horror movie is going to want this in their collection. \$12.95 plus \$2.35 for packaging, handling, and postage. 16mm H272



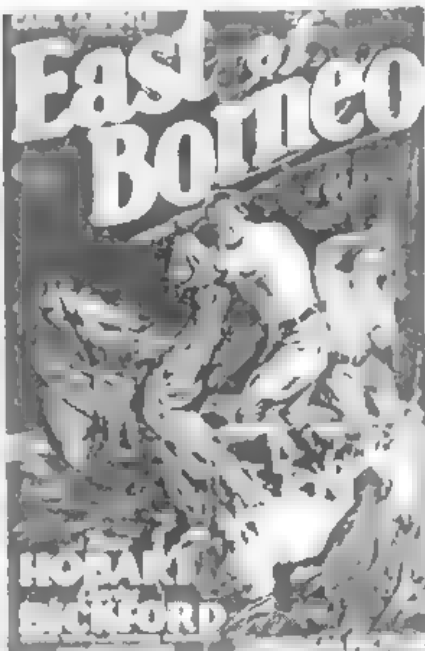
**A SCREAM IN THE NIGHT\*** 1935. Comedorel Lon Chaney. Zera Tazi. Sheila Terry. Dick Kramer. Lon plays two parts, a handsome detective and a scar-eyed killer. Detective Lon is stationed in the seedy side of an oriental city, seeking the notorious thief Johnny Fly. Evi Lon is Johnny's murderous henchman. Johnny kidnaps an American merchant's daughter and takes from her a precious ruby. Under disguise detective Lon plunges into the lowly hangouts of the city's criminal quarter in an effort to rescue her. Not a great film, but very atmospheric, with a sinister and decidedly exotic flavor. Always nice to see Lon in weird makeup. \$12.95 plus \$2.05 for packaging, handling, and postage. 35mm. FH60



**THE TEN GLADIATORS\*** (1963) Roger Browne. Dan Vadis. Susan Paget. Margaret Taylor. This was the first film in a very popular sword and sandal trilogy, yet it was most unusual in that the two follow-up films, *Spartacus* and *The Ten Gladiators* and *Triumph of the Ten Gladiators*, both available from Sinister, are actually prequels. A group of daring gladiators is mistaken for a notorious band of hooded zealots. They are captured by Nero's troops and later scheduled to fight to death in the arena! Well done sword and sandal thrills. Color from 16mm. \$5.47

**CASTLE OF THE CREEPING FLESH** (1958) Howard Vernon. Adrian Hoven. Janine Reynaud. A gashy yet moody European horror chiller. After his daughter is brutally murdered, a crazed surgeon vows to resurrect her from the dead. He begins killing innocent victims and purging their bodies of vital organs in his mad attempt to bring his daughter back to life. This is definitely not for the squeamish as there is beluouup amounts of guddy violence and actual footage of open-heart surgery. There is also a rape scene. Almost over the line for us, so please, keep this one away from the kids. A must for Euro-horror fans though. This would undoubtedly be rated R. Color from 35mm. H274

**THE HEADLINE WOMAN** (1935) Mascot. Roger Pryor. Heather Angel. Conway Tait. Jack LaRue. Russel Hopton. Ward Bond. Ford Sterling. Gabby Hayes. Wheeler Oakman. Warner Richmond. A great cast really helps make this into a top-of-the-line poverty row crime film. Pryor is a crackback reporter who is on the scene when a gangster is suspected of committed the crime. He then finds out she's the daughter of his boss. The rest is history. LaRue is after them both. So are the police. Bond has a great bit as a reporter who always calls in his kinkies while snoozing. Mascot didn't make them any slicker or better than this. Great fun. \$12.95 plus \$2.05 for packaging, handling, & postage. 16mm. M292



**WITCHCRAFT** (1951) Darren McGavin. Blanche Yurka. Franchot Tone. John Barrymore. Annemarie Rausser. Robert Middleton. Here's a forgotten b/w pic to an old TV horror series that never got past its first episode. It's a shame too because this is a quality show that you'll watch more than once. McGavin helps his friend battle a witch who has rezed him into paralysis. Very creepy and well done. Yurka is great as the European witch. Plus **WHO GOES THERE?** (1965, Pat Hingle) use Gays Ben Blue. Another one-shot fantasy TV pic. This one is a pleasant ghost-comedy about a young couple who rent a house haunted by the ghost of Colonel George Armstrong Custer. Obviously inspired by the success of *THE GHOST AND MRS. MUIR*. Directed by sci-fi fantasy master Jack Arnold. For the fun of it, we're also thrown in a full drive-in style intermission between the shows. Both from 16mm. H274

**INCREDIBLE PARIS INCIDENT\*** (1966) Roger Browne. Dominique Boschero. Richard Peters. One of the wackiest sci-fi super hero films you'll ever see. An evil villainess steals a process crown from the Tower of London. This brings Argonon onto the scene. Argonon is a columed super-hero armed with telekinesis and other super powers. However, he makes love to our haughty villainess, which caused him to lose his powers for six hours! During this period she plans another incredible heist. Watch for the scene involving Argonon's telekinetic powers and a villain jumping out of a high rise window. It's an absolute scream! This could aptly be described as a long-jaw-cheek class between James Bond and Starman movies. Campy. Color 16mm. \$222

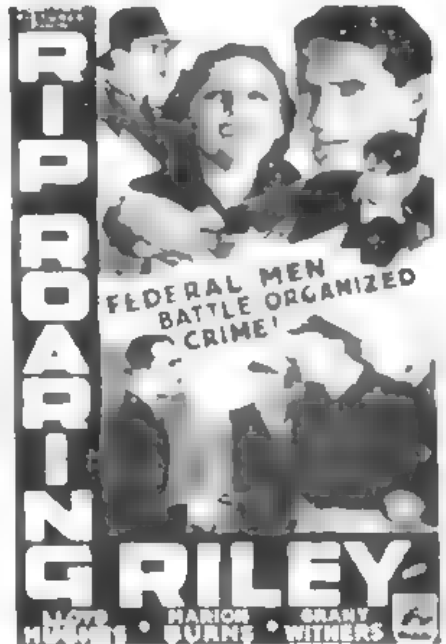
**CAPTAIN CELLULOID VS. THE FILM PIRATES\*** (1966) Robert Clayton. Donis Sumell. Alan Barbour. Barney Noto. William K. Evison. Made by a group of the world's most prestigious serial fans, this 4-chapter silent mini-serial is an amazingly well done b/w tribute to the movie serials of the 30s and 40s. The sinister "Master Duper" abducts negatives to silent film classics and duplicates them for himself using his "Instant Transmision Printer" which duplicates film in seconds! An agent for the Association of Film Distributors—who is secretly the famed hero, Captain Celluloid—must stop him. This may be the last single film of its kind. One great scene has the Master Duper using his disintegration ray on one of his henchmen who failed. Our thanks to producer/director Lou McMahon for making this obscure gem a double feature with another classic. Color 16mm. \$221



**EL TOPO** (1970) Alejandro Jodorowsky. Mara Lorenzo. David Silva. Paula Romo. One of the most notorious Euro-style westerns (it's actually Mexican, ever made). A black leather clad gungfaher cleans up a lonely town of ruthless bandits and four master outlaws from the desert. He's not too gentle about doing it either. Later he too is killed but soon after is resurrected. He then takes on a new mystical persona and sets out to rectify the injustices of his previous life. Considered a landmark film by many western critics. PLEASE! We do not recommend this for children under 18. Nudity and strong violence. NOTE: This is the original Red River pre-record this is no longer available in stores. It's re-recorded at SP. We have acquired a limited quantity so order now. Color 35mm. \$W29

**ELLIS ISLAND** 1936. Invinible! Donald Cook. Peggy Shannon. LaRue. Johnny Arthur. One of the better indie crime films we've seen recently. It opens with a daring bank robbery. Though the crooks are eventually trapped, a million in stolen loot remains missing. Cook is an Ellis Island immigration agent helping the Feds search for the money by grilling incoming and outgoing foreigners suspected of knowing the location of the missing loot. LaRue is excellent as the leader of a gang of thugs who are after the cash. There's a terrific night scene in a dreary, overgrown grave of a long dead immigrant. More specifically, they seem interested in what's buried in his coffin. A very atmospheric sequence for such a low budget thriller it's followed by an exciting chase across gloomy marshlands involving the gangsters and a hearse. Highly recommended. \$12.95 plus \$2.05 for packaging, handling, and postage. 16mm. M293

**WHEN THE GIRLS TAKE OVER** 1962. Parade! Robert Lowery. Marvin Miller. Jackie Cooper. Jimmy Elison. A hard movie to categorize. It starts off like an adventure comedy but veers into high exploitation toward the climax as a band of scantily clad babes are set loose before the cameras. Lowery plays a Castro look-a-like revolutionary who is holding the Prime Minister's daughter hostage in the jungles of a remote (and quite fictitious) island nation. Put out a six-pack and enjoy this one. VERY campy, but lovable in a hokey sort of way. 16mm. X. 61



**RIP ROARING RILEY\*** 1936. Funster! Lloyd Hughes. Grant Withers. Marion Burns. John Cowell. Riley is a tough government agent who is sent to mysterious Diamond Island to investigate weird happenings there. On the island, a renegade army major has forced a captive scientist to develop the most powerful poison gas known to science. When Riley discovers the gas, a giant container of the gas is ruptured and, like a death-carrying fog, it begins to spread over the entire island! This is one of the best of the new inclusions in the recently updated *Forgotten Horrors* book and we most definitely recommend it. No classic, but lots of fun. \$12.95 plus \$2.05 for packaging, handling, and postage. 16mm. FH62

**BOMBS OVER LONDON\*** (1937) Charles Farrell. Margaret Vyner. Danny Crain. Fritz Korner. What a feed! A great mix of sci-fi and espionage elements. A spy is mistaken for a man about to uncover a plot against an upcoming world peace conference in London. A secret group of military industrialists want the conference to fail and war to ensue. With the help of an outcast scientist, they develop a small fleet of wireless controlled airplanes that-as the film's exciting climax-are sent over London dropping powerful bombs on the unsuspecting population below. These climatic scenes are terrific! Genuine suspense builds.

Great lab scenes featuring remote control airplane systems and futuristic television devices. Superb special effects for the time. You don't want to miss this movie. It's really cool, like *Menace at Midnight*. 16mm. M113



**MURDER IN THE MUSEUM\*** (1934) Kent H.B. Washall. John Harlan. Phyllis Barrington. John Elkoff. A creepy little chiller conceived and directed by a mad scientist filled with freaks and mystia. When a scientist rigs out a prominent local politician falls to the floor dead! Things are further complicated when it's learned that the police received a tip about the shooting five minutes before it actually happened. Harlan, who was wife, as the hero in WHITE ZOMBIE, is very good as the snappy reporter who figures out the killer's identity. One truly frightening moment comes during a scene involving a "live" mummy. Mysterious howled cries, gangsters, sideshow freaks, tick-tockers, exotic dancers and tape, unless it's all part of this cheap but atmospheric thriller. \$12.95 plus \$2.05 for packaging, handling, and postage. From Green FH58

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### SCIENCE FICTION

**THE MISTRESS OF ATLANTIS** (1932 aka L'ATLANTIDE) Engle Helm, Jean Angelo, Pierre Blanchard. Two soldiers search the Sahara for Atlantis but are captured and taken to the lost city. They are taken before the Atlantean Queen who has 50 numbing ex-lovers. An endless nightmare follows, climaxing with murder. A sci-fi fantasy classic. **NOTE:** Our video master is from an outside source and is noticeably softer than our usual product but still quite acceptable. \$517.

**RIP ROARING RILEY** (1936) Puntieri Lloyd Hughes, Marion Burns, Grant Withers. Riley heads for an island to investigate weird happenings. On the island, Riley has forced a scientist to develop a powerful poison gas. Riley intercedes. When the gas container is ruptured, a death-carrying cloud spreads over the island. \$12.95 plus \$2.05 for packaging, handling, and postage. 16mm FH44.

**BOMBS OVER LONDON** (1937) Charles Farrell, Danny Green, Margaret Ivner. A secret group of military industrialists plot to start a war. An outbreak of scientists makes a small fleet of wireless controlled airplanes for them that—in the film's exciting climax—drop powerful bombs above London. Great last scenes! A must! 6mm \$1.8.

**DESTINATION SATURN** (1958) Buster Crabbe, Constance Moore, C. Montague Shaw, Jackie Moore. Buck Rogers wakes up in the year 2500 and races a band of weirdly dressed space-age thugs. Superb feature version of the famous "Crabbe" serial. 15mm \$220.

**CAPTAIN CELLULOID AND THE FILM PIRATES** (1988) Robert Clayton, Denis Burnell, Alan Barber, Barney Nale. A four-chapter mini-series; this tribute to the movie serials of the 30s and 40s. A sinister villain known as "The Master Dupel" abducts negatives to alien classics and duplicates them using his instant Transmision Printer. Captain Celluloid tries to thwart him. Highly recommended to all serial and sci-fi fans. Silent with music and effects. 16mm \$221.

**INCREDIBLE PARASITIC INCIDENT** (1988) Roger Browne, Dami, Soderberg, Ricardo Peliss. Our hero is Argeman, a "costumed criminal" armed with telekinesis and other powers. However, Argeman makes over to a haughty villainess, which causes him to lose his powers for six hours. During this period she plans an incredible heist. An ultra-campy blend of James Bond and Starman. Color 16mm \$222.

**ESCAPE FROM GALAXY 3** (1978) Cheryl Buchanan, James Milton, Don Powell. A pair of space lovers finds themselves in a far off galaxy surrounded by high tech hostiles. "Backward" follow as they try to escape from the grasp of crazed alien rulers. Color 16mm \$223.

### HORROR

**MURDER BY INVITATION** (1941 Monogram) Wallace Ford, Marion Marsh, Sara Padden. A full fledged old dark house horror chiller with the usual trimmings: a mysterious hooded killer, screams in the night, secret panels, disappearing bodies, sinister shadows, etc. Similar to Universal's Black Cat (1941). Definitely in the style of all Monogram horror films. The only thing missing is Lugosi! 16mm H268.

**DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE** (1955) Michael Rennie, Cedric Hardwicke, Mary Sinclair. The hottest horror find of the year! It's an hour episode of the old Cinescope series (commercials included) hosted by Bill Lundigan. Rennie is excellent as Jekyll/Hyde. Hardwicke and Sinclair also shine in support. Rennie's transformation scenes are excellent considering this was broadcast live. A must! 16mm H269.

**WITCHCRAFT** (1981) Darren McGavin, Blanche Yurka. A lost b/w pilot to an old TV horror series. This is a quality show that you'll watch more than once. A man helps his friend battle a witch who has put a hex on him. Creepy and well done. Plus: WHO GOES THERE (1955) Pat Hingle, Lisa Gayle. A rare fantasy TV pilot about a young couple who rent a house haunted by Custer's ghost. Directed by Jack Arnold. There's a drive-in intermission between shows. 16mm H270.

**CASTLE OF THE CREEPING FLESH** (1965) Howard Vernon, Adrian, Iovon, Jennie Reynolds. After his daughter is murdered, a crazed totem vows to resurrect her from the dead. He begins luring innocent victims and purging their bodies of organs in his mad attempt to return the. Nudity, violence, and a rape scene. Color 35mm H271.

**DEMONS OF THE MIND** (1977) Hammer, Paul Jones, Patrick Magee, Gillian Hills, Robert Hardy. Several girls are missing. A legendary demon is blamed. In a nearby castle, a deranged count keeps his hide under lock and key, thinking they're possessed. A hypnotist comes in to unlock the dreaded family secrets. **NOTE:** This is the original HBO pre-record no longer available in stores, recorded in SP. We have a limited quantity, so order soon! Color 35mm H272.

## Dr JEKYLL AND MR HYDE

**LEGEND OF BLOOD CASTLE** (1972) Lucio Boso, Espinaco, Santoni, Ewa Aulin. A well-done variation of the Countess of Bathory legend. The evil countess regularly bathes in the blood of virgins to ring to her fading youth. Very vampiric. Color 16mm H273.

**BEYOND THE DOOR** (1975) Richard Johnson, Julia Mills, David Colin, Jr. After the success of THE EXORCIST, many of us flocked to see this possession-inspired imitation. There are elements of ROSEMARY'S BABY as well. Mills plays a pregnant mother beset by demonic possession. Lots of multi-color gook is spewed forth. Mario Bava directed the sequel. Rated R. Color 16mm H274.

**CATHY'S CURSE** (1977) Alan Scarfe, Beverly Murray, Ed Purdon. A young couple suspects their little girl may be possessed by the spirit of a dead relative. What's with his dog? This is another of many '70s horror films to be inspired by THE EXORCIST. Color 16mm H275.

### SWORD AND SANDAL

**CAROLINE AND THE REBELS** (1962) Bridget Bardot, Jean-Claude Peccat, Magal Noël. The son of a royal Spanish family leaves home to fight the invading French. Tons of action, intrigue, and swordplay follow. He soon discovers a dark secret of his past that alters his life forever. Many sensual moments. Color 16mm \$5105.

**LOVES OF SALAMBO** (1962) Jeanne Valère, Ed Purdon, Jacques Sernas. An army of mercenaries demands payment from the beautiful Salambo of Carthage for their aid in fighting Rome. She and the head of the mercenaries become lovers, until it's discovered the gold payment has vanished. Letterboxed color 16mm \$5106.

**TEN GLADIATORS** (1963) Roger Browne, Dan Vada, Susan Pagat. The first title in a very popular sword and sandal trilogy. A cup of dandy gladiators is captured by Nero's troops. Later they are scheduled to fight to the death in the arena. Can they escape? Good sword & sensual thrills. From a nice color 16mm print. \$5107.

**SPARTACUS AND THE TEN GLADIATORS** (1964) Dan Vada, Helge Line, John Heston, Ursula Davis. Vada leads a 10-pack of gladiators who are banished from the arenas of Rome. They eventually end up joining forces with Spartacus and his army of slaves and help fight against the armies of Rome. Color from 16mm \$5108.

**TRUMPH OF THE TEN GLADIATORS** (1965) Dan Vada, Helge Line, Stanley Keri. Dan and his army join up to save a kidnapped queen from a gloomy past. Features sword, gladiators, and other classic elements in an episode in the same theme and style. \$55 actor. Cast of the 10 Gladiators. 6mm \$5109.



### FORGOTTEN HORRORS

**NOTE:** All titles in this section are US \$12.95 each unless otherwise noted, plus \$2.05 per title for packaging, handling, and postage.

**SINISTER HANDS** (1932) Kent Jack Murne, Paul Seaton, Masha Auer. Auer is a strange oriental mystic who is called to read his crystal ball to a small girl who is reading the lights go out. Suddenly there's a groan and she is to the floor. Murne is called in to find out exactly what's going on. All the guests have a motive. Gee, how unusual! 16mm H284.

**GET THAT GIRL** (1937) aka FEAR MANSION. Directed by Shirley Gray. Free Malatesta. A really weird little film. A young girl who is stuck to a large mirror in a room is a haunted mansion. Behind its mysterious walls is a crazed doctor performing strange experiments. He's developed a process for changing people into mannequins. Can Dick rescue her in time? From 16mm FH55.

**THE WHISPERING SHADOW** (1933) Mascot, Bela Lugosi, Malcolm McGregor, Vivian Tattersall, H.B. Walthall. There's a strange and eerie tale of the mysterious Professor Kiang, a fearsome actor on the stage. This is the well-edited feature version of the Mascot serial of the same name. From a nice old 16mm print FH56.

**PICTURE BRIDES** (1933, Alted) Regis Toomey, Alan Hale, Dorothy MacLair, Dorothy Libani. Four picture brides arrive in the deepest part of the wild Brazilian jungle to meet their husbands-to-be at a remote diamond mine. They find their lives in danger by the murderous sea lion owner of the mine, played to the hilt by Hale. Great performances by all. A stormy jungle action. 35mm FH57.



**CATHY'S CURSE**  
SHE HAS THE POWER  
...TO TERRORIZE.

Nicole Matthew Bolder and Eddy Mella on screen! CATHY'S CURSE featuring ALAN SCARFE, BEVERLY MURRAY and RANDY ALLEN. Directed by EDDY MELLA. Eastman color. R





**MURDER IN THE MUSEUM** (1934) Kent, HB Walshaw John Main Phillips dan 1934. A deep little thriller, entirely around a weird sidereal museum filled with freaks and myths. When a shot rings out a prominent local politician falls to the floor dead! A snappy spy is used to figure out who the mysterious killer is. One lightning moment comes during a scene involving a live mummy. 16mm F454

**BEAST OF BORNEO** (1934) John Preston Mae Susan Eugene Spaloff. A mad scientist named Boris Borodoff conducts strange experiments on jungle animals and his beautiful assistant goes deep into the jungle to capture a live ape so he can complete his experiments. This film contains the most laughable ape gobs ever committed to movie screen. From 16mm F454

**A SCREAM IN THE NIGHT** (1935) Constance Colby Cary Lars Faby Sheila Terry Manuel Lopez. Lon plays two parts: a handsome detective and a scar-eyed killer. Detective Lon is stationed in the desert seeking the notorious thief Johnny Fly. But Lon is drawn to a gorgeous henchman. A sinister plot follows. 16mm F460

**JAWS OF THE JUNGLE** (1935) Teelo Mintz Walter. Hordes of monstrous vampire bats drive a Laysanese tribe from their village into the jungle where they encounter every single animal imaginable. See what's going on in a vampire bat's living hell. Color. 16mm F461

**RIP ROARING RILEY** (1935) Pantany Lloyd Hughes. Marion B. J. Grant Withers. Riley heads for an island to investigate weird happenings. The island turns out to be a sinister, diabolical, a powerful poison gas. Riley overcomes the evil gas and the island is upturned, a death-carrying cloud spreads over the island. 16mm F462

## SPAGHETTI AND EURO WESTERNS

**DEAD FOR A DOLLAR** (1968) George Hilton London Monica John Ireland Monica Pardo. Three roving outlaws put off a \$200,000 bank job. They all try to double cross each other, but in the end a local prospector gets the upper hand on all of them. Color. 16mm SW25

**BOOT HILL** (1969) Terrence Hill Bud Spencer Victor Buono Lonny Sander Woody Strode Eduardo Ciannelli. What a cast! This awful western features two tough cowboys who rise into a number of bad dudes, along with some pretty wild women. Strode plays an ex-fighter turned rapist artist! Not bad at all. Color. 16mm SW27

**YOU'RE A JINXED FRIEND YOU'VE MET SACRAMENTO** (1970) Ty Hardin Christine May Jenny Agostino. A peaceful cowboy is forced into a showdown with a notorious town boss and his gang of thugs. Things get sticky when the boss kidnaps the cowboy's kids and holds them hostage. Much action follows. Color. 6mm SW28

**EL TOPO** (1971) Alejandro Jodorowsky Maria Lorenza David Sire. A vicious gunfighter ruthlessly cleans up a lonely town of thugs and desert outlaws. Soon he also is killed but later is resurrected. He then takes on a new mystical persona and sets out to rectify the injustices of his past. Considered a landmark film by many. PLEASE keep the kids away. nudity and strong violence. NOTE: This is the original Red River pre-record no longer available in stores, recorded in SP. We have a limited quantity to order soon. Color. 16mm SW29

## SINISTER SERIALS

NOTE: All titles in this section are just \$9.95 (includes worldwide shipping) plus \$2.05 per title for packaging, handling, and postage.

**PHANTOM OF THE WEST** (1931) Mascot Tom Tyler Dorothy Sullivan William Desmond. 10 chapters. A small town is terrorized by a ruthless pack of thugs known as the League of the Lawless. Their leader is an eerie masked killer known as "the phantom." Tom tries to bring the mysterious bandit to justice. The trail eventually leads to information about the murderer of his father. A must for Mascot serial fans. Mastered from a beautiful 16mm original print. \$1.34

**THE DEVIL HORSE** (1932) Mascot Harry Carey Frankie Carlo Noah Beery Sr. Al Broegg. 2 chapters. An accidental death sends from a man's effort to capture a wild horse. The brother of the slain man manipulates a young boy in a revenge plot. 16mm \$1.32

**PERLS OF PALM LINE** (1933) Universal Evelyn Knapp Robert Allen William Desmond. 13 chapters. Sunny Ray. 12 chapters. This serial has it all: cliff-hanging predicaments, villainous soundtracks, chase scenes, assaults, etc. How can you go wrong? 16mm \$1.33

**THE FIGHTING MARINES** (1935) Mascot Grani Withers Adrian Morris Ann Rutherford Robert Vanhook. 12 chapters. A marine sergeant invents a new "gyro-compass" which is coveted by a master criminal and his gang. Who is the mysterious "Tiger Shark"? As Mascot serials go this one's pretty darned good. 16mm \$1.34

**CAPTAIN CELLULOID AND THE FLM PIRATES** (1968) Robert Clayton Doris Burnett Alan Barbour Barney Noto. A loud chapter mini-series tribute to the movie serials of the 30s and 40s. A sinister villain, "the Master Dupier," steals negatives to silent classics and duplicates them using his "Instant Transmission Printer." Captain Celluloid tries to stop him. Highly recommended. Silent with music and effects. \$16.95 plus \$2.05 for shipping & handling. 16mm \$2.21

## ACTION/ADVENTURE

PLEASE NOTE: All titles in this section are just \$12.95, plus \$2.05 per title for packaging, handling, and postage.

**SKYWAY** (1932) Monogram Ray Walker Kathryn Crawford Arthur Union Lucien Littlefield. A brawling flyer becomes involved with a banker's daughter. When 10-grand ends up missing, he gets the blame. He takes off in a sea-plane, breaking over the ocean in an effort to catch the real crook. A fun Monogram. From 16mm AA15

**SUBMARINE BASE** (1943) PRC Alan Baxter John Lisle Fr. O'Grady. As PRC action films go, this one's not bad at all. Baxter is a former gangster on a remote island who has his own submarine dock where he routinely sells torpedoes to enemy subs. Lisle is a stand-out ex-NY cop who tries to stop Baxter's treacherous activities. 16mm AA20

**S.O.S. PACIFIC** (1959) Eddie Constantine Eva Bartok Richard Attenborough. This IS the best Constantine film. Eddie is a tough sailor who's been arrested and is being flown back to the mainland. During the flight, a fire erupts injuring the pilot. Eddie is called upon to land the plane near a remote island. After a hard landing, the plane sinks and the survivors discover the horror: the atomic bomb is set to go off on the island in less than five hours! Shot in English. Eddie's real voice. Our highest recommendation. 6mm AA21

**HEROES IN HELL** (1974) Klaus Kinski Ennio Morricone Two POWs make a bold escape from their prisoner of war camp. They soon find the French underground movement in a daring conspiracy against the Third Reich. A must for all Kinski fans. From 16mm AA22

## JUNGLE THRILLS

**EAST OF BORNEO** (1951) Universal Charles Bradford Rose to art Georges Renavent. A 4 star jungle thriller. Hobart takes a feathered river cruise into the deepest part of the African jungle, doing every imaginable peril. She soon arrives at Morinda, a lost city, a semi-empire and giant stone idols. There she finds her husband, who's with the city's tyrannical ruler. Some eye-popping moments of jungle horror. The climax is unforgettable as a nearby volcano erupts and spews boiling hot lava onto the city. Top special effects. Stunning interior and exterior sets. Our highest recommendation. 16mm J001

**WHITE GORILLA** (1947) Ray Coman Lorraine Miller Frank Merrill Charlie King. This wacky jungle thriller is a scream! When you've got a horrible white ape, clever natives, giant one-eyed stone gods, and Ray Coman, who cares about the plotline? This one's a real party film. The *Psychiatric Film Encyclopedia* called it "one of the cheapest and funniest features ever made." 16mm J059

**GOR LALA** (1956) Lars Olsson Sven Nykvist. A hunter travels deep into the jungle to hunt down a killer ape that's been pumping on the local natives. His efforts are hampered by a pretty, but pesky female journalist. A very interesting film shot on location. Many great scenes of wild animals and native rituals. Most of which appear unstaged. Do they really kill a gorilla or is it fake? Color. 16mm J060

**KARZAN AND HIS MATE** (1973) Johnny Weissmuller Jr. Simone Bondini Roger Blonnie. Safari film footage reveals a white gorilla man flying through the air. Another safari takes off to find him. A fairly well done retelling of the Tarzan legend. Color. 16mm J061



## EXPLOITATION

**DARING DAUGHTERS** (1933) Marion Marsh Joan Marsh. A big city girl goes to a small town to visit her father. She is seduced by her naive sister who wants to see what life is like. The father and sister are about to die. Can she save them? A fun and sexy girl in her bedroom? Campy fun. 16mm X099

**NARCOTIC** (1933) Harry Cording Joan De Pinaia Farley. A young medical student is caught in a drug addiction. He tries to break free, but he's in it too deep. Take a look at the horrors. 1930s style. 16mm X100

**WHEN THE GIRLS TAKE OVER** (1982) Robert Lowery. A young man is seduced by a beautiful girl who is a prostitute. He is then seduced by a beautiful girl who is a prostitute. He is then seduced by a beautiful girl who is a prostitute. 16mm X101



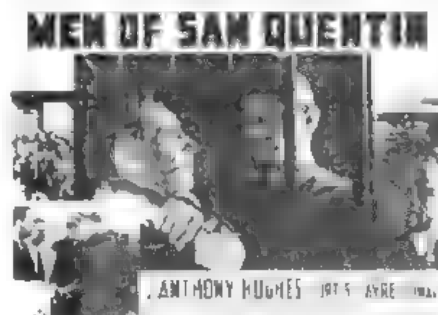
## SPYS, ESPIONAGE, & INTRIGUE

**THE VERSAILLES AFFAIR** (1960) Jean Tassier Danielle Godol van Desty. A fast-moving espionage thriller about two top secret agents who find themselves in a desperate race against time for the possession of valuable secret documents. Sudden death waits around every corner. Interesting script lots of action. 16mm SP18

**AGENT FOR PANIC** (1964) Brad Newman Eric Douglas. An action-packed spy movie. A secret agent is sent in to find the whereabouts of his former superior who is hidden somewhere in Czechoslovakia. Precious secret information is at stake. This is a very well paced espionage thriller and we recommend it. 16mm SP19

**13 DAYS TO DIE** (1965) Thomas Alder Peter Carsten Chora Ratana. Here's a real piece of intrigue laced with became and action. A master thief's demand for three million dollars for its return. It seems even one who wears the ruby eventually dies. What strange power does it hold? The "spies on the ceiling" scene is a knockout. Lots of man-eating crocodiles too. Great fun. 16mm SP40

**OUR AGENT TIGER** (1965) Roger Mann Margaret Lee Michel Bouquet. A French submarine discovers gold off a foreign island. A secret agent is sent to recover it, but runs into a web of danger from revolutionaries who want he gold to buy arms. Color. 16mm SP41



## MYSTERY-SUSPENSE-FILM NOIR

PLEASE NOTE: All titles in this section are just \$12.95, plus \$2.05 per title for packaging, handling, and postage.

**THE SHADOW LAUGHS** (1933) Hal Skelly Rose Hobart Harry Meyer Walter Fenner. A bank cashier is pressured by a mysterious caller to repay his gambling debts. The shadowy criminal kills a bank guard after the cashier takes a hundred grand from the vault. He then shoots the cashier and vanishes with the loot. A snappy reporter tries to figure out who the called killer really is. From 16mm M291

**THE HEADLINE WOMAN** (1935) Mascot Roger Pryor Heather Ange Conway Tearle Jack LaRue Russell Hepton Ward Bond Ford Sterling. A great cast! helps make this a top indie crime film. Pryor is a crackpot reporter who witnesses the murder of a gangster. Roger hides away a beautiful dame who's suspected of committing the crime. He then finds out she's the daughter of his boss! The real killer, LaRue is after them both. So are the police. Bond has a great bit as a reporter who always calls in his stories while snoozing. Mascot really make them any better or better than his. Superb! 8mm M292

**ELL'S ISLAND** (1936) Donald Cook Peggy Shannon Jack LaRue. A film noir from the 1930s. A man is accused of a murder. He ends up in a creepy overgrown graveyard where LaRue and the thugs have dug up a weed-covered grave. They're very interested in what a buried witness. Soon there's an exciting chase over dark marshlands involving the thugs and a hearse! 16mm M233

**DEMAND PAYMENT** (1936) Imperial Jack LaRue Betty Blythe. A man is accused of a murder. He ends up in a creepy overgrown graveyard where LaRue and the thugs have dug up a weed-covered grave. They're very interested in what a buried witness. Soon there's an exciting chase over dark marshlands involving the thugs and a hearse! 16mm M233

**MEN OF SAN QUENTIN** (1942) PRC Anthony Hughes. A prison guard who's targeted as a fall guy in an inner-prison conspiracy masterminded by convict leader MacKendall. Charles goes good at paying a total jerk. A nifty PRC prison pic. From 6mm M295

**MURDER AT 11 A.M.** (1953) Raymond Dennis Price Peggy Evans. A man is accused of a murder. He ends up in a creepy overgrown graveyard where LaRue and the thugs have dug up a weed-covered grave. They're very interested in what a buried witness. Soon there's an exciting chase over dark marshlands involving the thugs and a hearse! 16mm M233

**TAKES A THEIF** (1954) Raymond Dennis Price Peggy Evans. A man is accused of a murder. He ends up in a creepy overgrown graveyard where LaRue and the thugs have dug up a weed-covered grave. They're very interested in what a buried witness. Soon there's an exciting chase over dark marshlands involving the thugs and a hearse! 16mm M233

**MARK OF THE TORTOISE** (1964) Hildegarde Knell, Gatz. A man is accused of a murder. He ends up in a creepy overgrown graveyard where LaRue and the thugs have dug up a weed-covered grave. They're very interested in what a buried witness. Soon there's an exciting chase over dark marshlands involving the thugs and a hearse! 16mm M233

**DO YOU KNOW THIS VOICE?** (1964) Dan Duryea. A man is accused of a murder. He ends up in a creepy overgrown graveyard where LaRue and the thugs have dug up a weed-covered grave. They're very interested in what a buried witness. Soon there's an exciting chase over dark marshlands involving the thugs and a hearse! 16mm M233

**DESPERATE MOMENTS** (1970) Frank Wolff Fernando Rey. A man is accused of a murder. He ends up in a creepy overgrown graveyard where LaRue and the thugs have dug up a weed-covered grave. They're very interested in what a buried witness. Soon there's an exciting chase over dark marshlands involving the thugs and a hearse! 16mm M233

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# the NEWS



# HOUND

**H**appy Halloween, Trick or Treaters and Scarlet Streeters! Pay no attention to that blood trailing from The Hound's door. Creep right in and get treated to terrifying tidbits of tantalizing media news.

## Theatrical Thrills

Coming in November to your local big-screen bigou, Denzel Washington plays paraplegic NYPD detective Lincoln Rhyme, who tracks down a serial killer with the aid of his ô eg mano Amelia Sachs, played by leggy Angelina Jolie, in *THE BONE COLLECTOR* (Universal), based on Jeffery Deaver's thriller. . . Pierce Brosnan makes his penultimate appearance as Bond, James Bond in *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH*, United Artists' 19th 007 extravaganza which co-stars Robert Carlisle as the requisite diabolical villain and Sophie Marceau and Denise Richards as the mandatory eye candy. . . Arnold Schwarzenegger attempts to save Robin (*THE CRAFT*) Turney from becoming the bride of Satan (Gabriel Byrne) on Millennium Eve in Universal's supernatural shocker *END OF DAYS*.

Arriving in December, Horror sequel *SCREAM 3* (Dimension) brings back old yellers Neve Campbell, Courteney Cox, and David Arquette, and joins them with downtown girl Parker Posey and former *MILLENNIUM* man Lance Henriksen. Tom Hanks plays a death row prison guard who discovers that an inmate (Michael Clarke Duncan of *ARMAGEDDON*) has mysterious healing powers in Stephen King's Depression-era drama *THE GREEN MILE* (Warner Bros.). Frank Darabont, who previously helmed the King adaptation *THE SHAWSHANK REDEMPTION*, returns to the director's chair here. Also arriving in December is Disney's version of Isaac Asimov's *Bi-centennial Man*, starring a robotic Robin Williams, and Roman Polanski's supernatural thriller *THE NINTH GATE* (Artisan), starring Johnny Depp and onetime Dracula Frank Langella.

## A Chip Off the Old Castle

The Castle of Terror creaks open its doors once again to the macabre and the homicidal. Terry Castle, daughter of the late scare sultan William Castle, has resurrected her dad's production company with plans to develop a slate of fright features for the third millennium. The new incarnation of William Castle Productions will create horror films aimed at the youth market (as did her dad, let's face it), and will remake some of the elder Castle's ghastly gimmick filled features of the fifties and sixties.

A former executive at the kids' cable channel Nickelodeon, where she oversaw the spooky teen series *ARE YOU AFRAID OF THE DARK*, the distaff Castle has already begun her eerie efforts with the Warner Bros. remake of *HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL*, which she coproduced along with Robert Zemeckis and Joel Silver. Next in line will be *POINT DUME*, an original thriller from *ARE YOU AFRAID* creator D.J. MacHale and *RUBBISH*, a terror tale about teens trapped in an English castle (*Shades of 13 FRIGHTENED GIRLS!*).

The gimmicky effects with which William Castle ballyhooed his original horror hits—including *Emergo*, *Percepto*, and *Il-*



**Televiewers have a date with an ANGEL this fall when David Boreanaz spins off his popular character from BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER.**

lusion O—were every bit as endearingly schlocky as the flicks themselves. Whether Terry Castle's future plans include leading fearful moviegoers into the Coward's Corner a la *HOMICIDAL*, or inflicting *TINGLER*-style shocks on patrons' butts, remains to be seen, of corpse.

## Scary Scuttlebutt

A studio executive's best friend is his Mummy. The hundreds of millions of shekels earned by Universal this year from *THE MUMMY* has got them wrapping up a deal with writer/director Stephen Som-

mers to reprise his summertime hit with a sandy sequel. Despite cries of "It sphinx!" from Karloffian purists, production on the follow-up is planned for next year.

Arnold Schwarzenegger will portray *DOC SAVAGE: THE MAN OF BRONZE* in a new adaptation from Castle Rock/Warner Bros. of Kenneth Robeson's pulp magazine stories from the thirties. Warners' first attempt at Doc Savage was 25 years ago, with an identically titled adventure starring former TV Tarzan Ron Ely in the role of Doc. That version—producer George Pal's final film—was released in 1975 to disinterested audiences. The new production will be written by David Leslie Johnson and Brett Hill and produced by Frank Darabont (*THE SHAWSHANK REDEMPTION*).

The late Stanley Kubrick had grand plans—but typically secretive ones—for a return to epic sci-fi storytelling, with a project entitled *A.I.* (for Artificial Intelligence). Now it seems Warner Bros. is ready to turn over the project to Steven Spielberg, with the blessing of Kubrick's estate. Spielberg and Kubrick became friends in recent years and may perhaps have consulted on the project.

## Updates Aplenty

Antonio Banderas and Catherine Zeta Jones, costars of *THE MASK OF ZORRO*, are rumored to be considering a little more unmasking for Warner Bros., as the stars of the interminably-planned adaptation of Andrew Lloyd Webber's *PHANTOM OF THE OPERA*. . . More mutant casting announcements for 20th Century Fox's *X-MEN* feature: Famke Janssen as Jean Gray, Bruce Davison as Senator Scott Kelly, Ray (Darth Maul) Park as Toad, Halle Berry as Storm, and supermodel Rebecca Romijn-Stamos as Mystique. . . A film version of Patrick McGoochan's cult TV series *THE PRISONER* may be closer to commencing, now that the rights have fallen to executive Barry Diller's USA Films. Mel Gibson is the rumored frontrunner for the role of Number Six. . . And in a published interview, Lucasfilm producer Rick McCallum said that the fourth *INDIANA JONES* film won't begin shooting till 2005 because of scheduling conflicts. Early guesses at a title for the next installment include *INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST STRAW* and *RAIDERS OF THE BROKEN HILL*.

## Television Thrills

American Movie Classics chills the cockles of horror fans' teatime hearts this Halloween with another of their yearly

*Continued on page 18*



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Yes, sir, horror and mystery mavens, it's the Spider Woman's all-purpose Website, designed especially for you! Just see what you'll find . . . .

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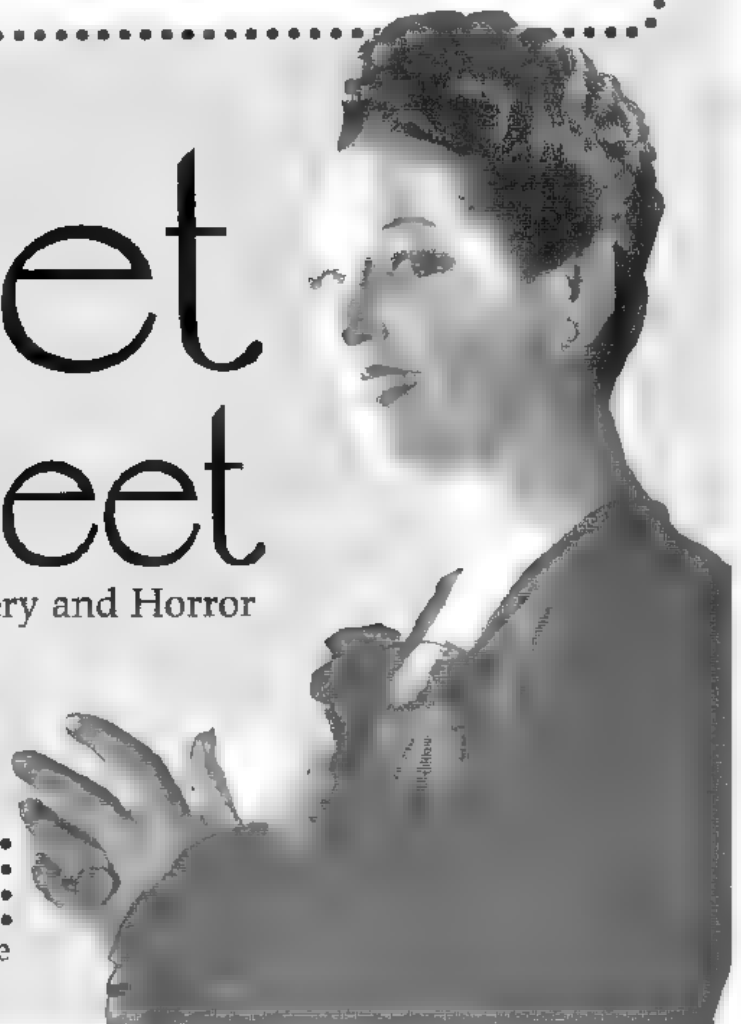
# Scarlet Street

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www.scarletstreet.com

Website designed by John E. Payne



## NEWS HOUND

*Continued from page 16*

MONSTERFEST movie smorgasbords during Hallow-week MONSTERFEST '99 is hosted by legendary B-movie producer/director Roger Corman, whose works will be well represented by screenings of PIT AND THE PENDULUM, THE RAVEN, and many others. The scary slate of screenings begin on Sunday evening, October 24, and continues each successive evening, leading up to a 57-hour horror movie marathon starting Friday night, October 29, and ending in the wee hours of Monday, November 1. Crammed into the schedule on Saturday is a 16-hour Japanese monster movie mini-marathon, featuring GODZILLA and all his colossal cronies.

The Arts & Entertainment cable channel will bring Rex Stout's Nero Wolfe to the small screen next year in an adaptation of Stout's novel *The Golden Spiders*. The New York detective/gourmet/horticulturist will be portrayed by the familiar Canadian character actor Maury Chaykin, recently seen on the big screen in ENTRAPMENT. Timothy Hutton plays his assistant Archie Goodwin (Hutton's late dad Jim did some TV detecting of his own in the 1975 NBC series THE ADVENTURES OF ELLERY QUEEN.) A&E plans to follow THE GOLDEN SPIDERS with several more Wolfe telefilms.

The 20th anniversary season of the PBS showcase series MYSTERY! continues in October with a new pair of stories featuring Helen Baxendale as P.D. James' private detective Cordelia Gray in AN UNSATISFACTORY JOB FOR A WOMAN. Then in

November, the host of the WGBH produced series, Diana Rigg, exercises her considerable acting chops when she stars in the 90-minute pilot episode of THE MRS. BRADLEY MYSTERIES. Rigg plays a wealthy emancipated woman of twenties England who has a penchant for crime solving—sort of a Lady Peter Wimsey. Further episodes of BRADLEY MYSTERIES will be shown during MYSTERY's 2000-2001 season.

Steven Spielberg and Kathleen Kennedy will produce a four-hour miniseries for ABC Television next year based on Stephen King and Peter Straub's 700-page fantasy tome *The Talisman*. The story tells of the adventures of 12-year-old Jack Sawyer and his journey across America—and a parallel world called The Territories—to find a mystical crystal globe which will save the life of Jack's mother and quite possibly the whole world.

Back in July, satellite TV provider DirecTV began telecasting what is probably the world's first pay-per-view TV series, THE LOST WORLD. It's based on Arthur Conan Doyle's adventure fantasy novel and the 1999 pay-cable adaptation coproduced by John Landis. A total of 20 episodes will be broadcast, with a new installment offered to DirecTV subscribers about every other week through February of 2000. Each LOST WORLD episode sets armchair adventurers back \$1.49. Watch for the series to appear in basic-cable syndication starting this fall.

And rumor has it that Showtime has finally opted to go ahead with FURTHER TALKS OF THE CITY, based on Armistead Maupin's bestselling novel.

## The Home Video Vault

Already stalking you on home video are two Anchor Bay special editions of modern horror classics. A special release of John Carpenter's HALLOWEEN—available on VHS and DVD—includes large galleries of never-before seen production photos. The DVD version also features a newly-produced behind-the-scenes documentary. A 30th anniversary edition of NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD has also surfaced from Anchor Bay, featuring a new stereo music score. It's been reedited to include 15 minutes of new zombie footage shot near the original locations by three of the original filmmakers (but not director George Romero). The newly-formed DEAD is available on VHS for \$14.95, on DVD for \$24.98, and in a limited edition DVD/soundtrack CD package for \$34.98.

Haunting the halls of your local video store in October is THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT (Artisan; VHS \$22.98, DVD \$29.98). The DVD release includes an audio commentary by the directors, and the 44-minute CURSE OF THE BLAIR WITCH mockumentary that ran on Sci-Fi Channel earlier this year. (The CURSE featurette is also available on VHS as a companion to BLAIR WITCH in a two-tape set for \$32.98. None of this is to be confused with another independent film, coincidentally titled THE BARE TITS PROJECT.) From Artisan in October come special DVD editions of THE STAND (\$39.98)—with commentaries by Stephen King, director Mick Garris, and others—

*Continued on page 21*



Edward D. Wood, Jr., the auteur behind such great classics as PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE (1959), may be gone, but he has somehow managed a screenwriting credit on a brand new movie called I WOKE UP EARLY THE DAY I DIED, featuring the sort of cast that he could never have envisioned, not even in his wildest imaginings.

Uhh... well, maybe in his wildest imaginings.

## How to Succeed in Hollywood . . . Without Really Living!

by Drew Sullivan

It seems some filmmakers got their hands on a never-produced Wooden script, and gussied it up with star Billy Zane (pictured, naturally, in drag) and special appearances by Sandra Bernhard, Karen Black, Tippi Hedren, Eartha Kitt, Andrew McCarthy, Christina Ricci, Rick Schroder, Jonathan Taylor Thomas (pictured with Hedren), Steven Weber, and Woodian vets Conrad Brooks and Vampira.

Is the Cinequanon Pictures International release, directed by Aris Iliopoulos, a good movie? Is that even the point? We're talking Ed Wood here, and while the film sorely lacks the innocence and naivete of the Master (who, after all, though he was making good movies), it has a few choice nuggets to offer the viewer in search of something a little recherche. Unfortunately, it lacks Wood's most notable "talent" as a filmmaker: the film is without dialogue—but listen, you can't have everything.

Besides, seeing the unbilled Bud Cort do a spot-on silent impression of Franklin Pangborn should be enough.





# One for Ripley

by Greg Walton

**A**s a followup to his Academy Award darling *THE ENGLISH PATIENT* (1996), Anthony Minghella takes on *THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY*, starring indie faves Matt Damon, Gwyneth Paltrow, Cate Blanchett, and Jude Law (who began his career as the cross dressing Joe Barnes in the *SHOSCOMBE OLD PLACE* episode of the late Jeremy Brett's Sherlock Holmes series). Based on the critically acclaimed 1955 crime novel by Patricia Highsmith (also author of 1950's *Strangers on a Train*, which became an instant Hitchcock classic in 1951), the film is set in fifties Italy, with the boyish Damon as the amoral Tom Ripley sent to retrieve young socialite Dickie Greenleaf (Law), with whom he becomes enamored. But Ripley soon sees the benefits of the silver spoon lifestyle and deciding, "Better to be a fake somebody than a real nobody," plots to replace poor Dickie... with himself.

Considered one of the more literary novelists working in the crime genre, Highsmith led a reclusive lifestyle in Europe until her death in 1995. Her novels, which quite often dealt with sexual minorities (the subtext of which even survives in Hitchcock's filmic translation of *STRANGERS*), spawned a string of Ripley books, including

*Ripley Under Ground* (1970), *Ripley's Game* (1974), and *The Boy Who Followed Ripley* (1980). Earlier adapted as the French film, *PURPLE NOON* (directed by Rene Clement, starring the bisexual Alain Delon as the bisexual Ripley), the U.S. Version is blessed with a wealth of good-looking actors who can actually act, so much so that MR. RIPLEY seems like a psychological thriller with a pedigree.

Will Miramax mount another Oscar campaign this year? If they do, here's betting it'll be one for *THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY*. And if they don't, it'll be one for *Ripley's Believe It Or Not*...

**Marge Sherwood (Gwyneth Paltrow) loves Dickie Greenleaf (Jude Law), but so does Tom Ripley (Matt Damon)—loves him enough to kill him, in fact, and take over his life!**



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The Empty House  
The Abbey Grange  
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The Six Napoleons  
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The Problem of Thor Bridge  
The Boscombe Valley Mystery  
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# HEADS Will Roll!

by Greg Walton

Halloween arrives a little late this year. Screw the turkey—figuratively speaking—and get to a theater!

Influenced by the British film studio Hammer and its neo expressionistic horror films of the fifties and sixties, Tim Burton walks the line between reality and fantasy. Or so claims Paramount in the highly anticipated Thanksgiving release of *SLEEPY HOLLOW*, based (very loosely) on the classic 1819 story "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" by Washington Irving and starring frequent Burton collaborator Johnny Depp as Ichabod Crane, an investigator from New York sent to look into some mysterious beheadings. The Burton/Depp combination is particularly potent, resulting in such earlier classics as *EDWARD SCISSORHANDS* (1990) and *ED WOOD* (1994), wherein Depp donned the pink cashmere of everyone's favorite bad director. Previous versions of the spooky story include the Disney animated feature *ICHABOD AND MR. TOAD* (1949, pictured below), which showcased both Kenneth Grahame's 1908 book *The Wind in the Willows* (narrated by Basil Rathbone) and "The Legend" (with narration and crooning by Bing Crosby).

Surrounded by some of the most eerily beautiful outdoor sets ever constructed, the film is sure to look fantastic, while the script, by *SEVEN* and *8MM* writer Andrew Kevin Walker, is the crucial x-factor that has everyone's fingers crossed. Once rumored to be extremely gory, word now is that nary a drop is spilled beyond typical Hammer standards. The must-see trailer features fairy tale imagery (a young child playing with a spooky shadow-casting lantern) and related head-chopping. Although the horseman himself (whose stunts are per-



All right, so in the original Washington Irving story, "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" (1819), Ichabod Crane is a lean and lanky schoolmaster. In Tim Burton's *SLEEPY HOLLOW*, the new film based on the old classic, Crane (Johnny Depp) is a police investigator sent to the little village to look into a few beheadings. He still gets to romance the lovely Katrina Van Tassel (Christina Ricci).

Christopher Walken (the Horseman himself, it appears, though in the story the head-challenged spectre is actually Brom Bones). Even Hammer veterans Michael Gough and Christopher Lee are on hand, and, I'm sure, had their heads rubbed copiously during production for good luck. For those of you who can't wait, the website features production sketches that "... reflect the supernatural essence of the film." Ummmm, supernatural essence. Goes great with turkey!

formed by Ray "Darth Maul" Park) is mostly hidden from view in the preview, his manner seems suitably threatening. Filling the role of Katrina Van Tassel is Christina Ricci (Wednesday in the *ADDAMS FAMILY* films), while Caspar Van Dien (*STARSHIP TROOPERS*, *TARZAN*) tackles the part of her jealous suitor, Brom Bones (here called Brom Van Brunt). Other cast members of note include Miranda Richardson, Michael Gambon, Jeffrey Jones (Criswell in *ED WOOD*), and





## NEWS HOUND

*Continued from page 18*

and **STARGLATE** (\$29.98) which includes both the full-length theatrical version and the special release augmented with nine extra minutes of footage.

Other new DVD releases in October include the first two **FRIDAY THE 13TH** slasherfests (Paramount, \$29.99 each), an Anchor Bay special edition of Sam Raimi's **ARMY OF DARKNESS** (\$24.98) with deleted scenes and a new making-of documentary, David Cronenberg's freaky cyber thriller **EXISTENZ** (Miramax, VHS rental, DVD \$29.99), and the 1983 British television production of **THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES**, starring Ian Richardson as Sherlock Holmes, Donald Churchill as Dr. John Watson, and Nicholas Clay as Jack Stapleton. (Image, \$19.99)

Still more October releases: **THE THIRTEENTH FLOOR** (Columbia/TriStar, VHS rental, DVD \$24.98), **THE RAGE**, **CARRIE 2** (MGM/UA; VHS rental, Laser \$29.98), William Castle's **HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL** (Warner, DVD \$29.98), and a highly welcome 24th (and a half) year anniversary edition of Mel Brooks' **YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN**, featuring bloopers ("He wasn't my boyfriend?"), outtakes, and behind the scenes footage. Dig up the VHS widescreen edition for \$14.98, or the DVD for \$34.98, which includes an audio commentary by Mel Brooks.

Indiana Jones gallops into video stores once again in October in a Paramount gift pack that contains widescreen VHS editions of all three Indy adventures (1981's **RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARC**, 1984's **INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM**, and 1989's **INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE**) for \$35.99. Also available in October are the first 12 episodes of the late George Lucas television series **THE YOUNG INDIANA JONES CHRONICLES**. The remaining 11 episodes are due next year.

Bond is back in a big way on home video. All 19 United Artists 007 adventures will be reissued on VHS and DVD in special editions from MGM/UA, starting with seven titles this October. Each VHS edition is \$14.98, and the DVDs are \$34.98—or \$199.98 for the set of seven. Two more Bond batches will be released during the coming year, concluding with **THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH** which arrives on video in December of 2000. The DVD editions include lots of supplements, including some behind-the-scenes documentary featurettes coproduced by Bond connoisseur and friend of *Scarlet Street*, Paul Scrabo.

Hey, baby! **AUSTIN POWERS: THE SPY WHO SHAGGED ME** (New Line) arrives on VHS (\$19.99), DVD (\$24.99) and laserdisc (\$29.99) in November, as does DreamWorks' overblown remake of **THE HAUNTING**, the Sean Connery caper **ENTRAPMENT** (Fox; VHS and DVD), and a special VHS edition of the cyber-hit **THE MATRIX** in either pan-scan or letterboxed versions for \$14.95.

The Hound's pappy remembers haunting the New York City cinemas way back in 1930 and being astounded by Roland West's mystery meller **THE BAT WHIS-**

**PERS** in its experimental 65mm wide screen version. This rare version will be released in November in the letterbox format on DVD (\$29.99) by Image Entertainment on a special disc that includes the regular flat version as well. Liner notes are provided by *Scarlet Street*'s very own Rampaging Reditor, Richard Valley.

### Vid Invasion

Image Entertainment continues to be a DVD collector's best friend. Image has contracted with producer/procurer Wade Williams to release to disc some of the most memorable horror and sci-fi B movies in his collection: **THE ASTOUNDING SHE-MONSTER**, **THE BRAIN FROM PLANET AROUS**, **CAT WOMEN OF THE MOON**, **THE COSMIC MAN**, **COSMIC MONSTERS**, **THE CRAWLING EYE**, **DESTINATION MOON**, **DEVIL GIRL FROM MARS**, **GIANT FROM THE UNKNOWN**, **THE HIDEOUS SUN DEMON**, **KRONOS**, **THE PHANTOM PLANET**, **PROJECT MOONBASE**, and **ROCKET SHIP X-M**. Image also has DVD releases in the works of five of Edward D. Wood Jr.'s most notorious productions: **BRIDE OF THE MONSTER**, **GLEN OR GLENDA?**, **JAIL BAIT**, **NIGHT OF THE GHOULS**, and **PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE**.

### Universally Monstrous

Currently menacing your local video dungeon are some monstrous treats from Universal Home Video. Tops among them is the new, feature-filled DVD releases of James Whale's original **FRANKENSTEIN** (\$29.98) and Karl Freund's **THE MUMMY** (\$29.98). In October, a similarly accessorized DVD edition of **BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN** (1935; \$29.98) hits the shelves, with a documentary by David J. Skal that's hosted by director Joe Dante. Next to join Universal's DVD monster rally is **DRACULA**, featuring an option on the disc to hear Philip Glass' newly-created background score behind Bela's bloodcurdling intonations. (A **DRACULA** edition featuring the new Glass score is already available on VHS.) The DVD is actually two Dracs in one, since it will also feature the Spanish version filmed concurrently with the English edition.

### Fearsome Flotsam

Songwriter Jim Steinman, best known for penning the Meat Loaf album **BAID OUT OF HELL**, keeps the bats flying with his next scheduled project: composing the music and lyrics for the Warner Bros. Broadway musical **BATMAN**. The book is to be written by David Ives, playwright of the recent Off-Broadway play



First there was **TALES**, then **MORE TALES**—and now **FURTHER TALES OF THE CITY** looks like a go. Will Paul Hopkins and Laura Linney (pictured with Colin Ferguson as Burke Andrew) be back as Mouse and Mary Ann? Time will tell . . .

**ALL IN THE TIMING.** The *Batmusical* is scheduled to hit Gotham City's Great White Way in 2001. Steinman's other bat-related musical, Roman Polanski's stage adaptation of **DANCE OF THE VAMPIRES**, may take a bite out of the Broadway boards in the Fall of 2000.

The scary sounds of Sunnydale arrive at music stores in October whenTVT Records releases the soundtrack to **BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER**. In addition to the head-banging main title tune by Nerf Herder, the disk features songs by the trendy bands Sugar Ray, Garbage, Velvet Cham, and others.

Dark Mistress of Horror Anne Rice is overseeing a 12-issue comic book adaptation of her 1992 novel *The Tale of the Body Thief* for Sicilian Dragon Publishing. The first monthly issue debuted in September, with a script by Faye Perovich, who has written four previous Rice comic book adaptations.

Halloween Online, a website for one-stop chopping for all All Hallows' Eve information, downloads, and crafty ideas for costumes and accoutrements, can be found at <http://www.halloweenonline.com>.

Gone, but never to be forgotten: stop-motion animator David Allen, Universal makeup artist Nick Mancillino, DC Comics writer John Broome, novelist/screenwriter Mario Puzo, actor/writers Ronny Graham and Everett Greenbaum, producers Allan Carr and Allen Funt, director Charles Crichton, comedy writer Harry Crane, and actors Ruth Roman, Marguerite Chapman, Mary Jane Croft, Ross Elliott, Sandra Gould, Nancy Guild, Brian James, Dorothy Lee, Charles Macaulay, Victor Mature, Sylvia Sydney, Bob Watson, and Herbert Wiers, the last surviving member of The Wiers Brothers comedy team. (The Hound is now retiring to the den to watch **ROAD TO RIO** in tribute.)

Send The Hound your questions, comments and compliments via E-mail to [TheNewsHound@yahoo.com](mailto:TheNewsHound@yahoo.com)



# SCREEN...



## and Screen AGAIN!

### Scarlet Street's DVD and Laser Review

**UNITED ARTISTS  
HORROR CLASSICS VOLUME 2**  
MGM Home Entertainment  
Six Sides CLV  
Laserdisc, \$99.95

Image Entertainment's UNITED ARTISTS HORROR CLASSICS VOLUME 2 begins with its earliest entry, THE NEANDERTHAL MAN (1953). Robert Shayne (aka Cliff Groves), a man obsessed with proving his theory that the Neanderthal man was nearly the intellectual equal of the modern Homo sapien. The actor's portrayal is uncharacteristically over the top as he brings a wide-eyed manic intensity to the role. California's High Sierras provide a conveniently secluded theater of operations for Groves' scientific experiments. However, a housecat that he transforms into a saber-toothed tiger draws unwanted attention from local authorities.

The professor injects himself as well as causing sleepless nights of "Neanderthal-ing" around while locked in a regressive state. The fact that the act of killing is part of his nocturnal behavior may backhandedly prove his thesis. That irony is lost on the gun-toting posse, who witness Groves being killed by his own homicidal psycho jungle cat.

Despite the contributions of writers/producers Jack Pollexfen and Aubrey Wisberg, cinematographer Stanley Cortez, composer Albert Glasser, special-effects man Jack Rabin, and featured performer Beverly Garland, the film never transcends its meager budget. The titular character's makeup suggests a phantom from the Rue Morgue rather than a member of a closer human subspecies.

The eventual discovery of photographs that demonstrate experimentation on a deaf-mute housekeeper is the only truly macabre moment. Overall, it's a pedestrian production that unconvincingly attempts to scale Frankensteinian heights

with such pontificated pronouncements as "He tampered with things beyond his province" and "Those whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad."

The next selection, THE VAMPIRE (1957, aka MARK OF THE VAMPIRE on television) represents a level of greater sophistication. Dr. Paul Beecher (John Beal) is a folksy small-town physician who accidentally takes pills containing a serum derived from vampire bats. The doctor undergoes a gradual transformation, culminating in addiction to the substance. Soon, he satiates his newly developed craving by killing townspeople for their blood.

Material that could have resulted in simply one more monster-on-the-prowl potboiler is imbued with a tragic eloquence. Beecher is a man audiences can root for—he's the kind of doctor who allows his patients to pay when they are able. He struggles mightily against his chemical dependency, even sending family and friends away who might be endangered by him. Beal communicates a level of anguish rarely portrayed in such horror films.

The title is somewhat misleading, as the vampirism depicted is far removed from the usual seductive posturing. Beecher's compulsion for blood is a disease more akin to drug addiction than carnal desire. Pat Fielder's scenario provokes genuine sympathy for the killer, as well as his victims. Sheriff Buck Donnelly (Kenneth Tobey) is informed that the perpetrator only drinks a small amount of blood from his prey, but coincidentally passes the lethal

virus to them through his saliva. Such attention to credible detail stands apart from the mass of horror pictures dependent on scientific gobbledegook to justify their premises. Also blessedly absent is the kind of moralizing that is often grafted onto genre dramas.

The production team of writer Fielder, director Paul Landres, producers Jules V. Levey and Arthur Gardner, and composer Gerald Fried, would later collaborate on THE RETLERN OF DRACULA (1958), another well-crafted depiction of a small American town corrupted by vampirism. Both vampire efforts are memorable for providing three-dimensional character studies that provide equal time for the menaces and their victims. THE VAMPIRE, in its home video debut, makes the box set a must for horror completists.

Our path abruptly descends from the sublime to the ridiculous, as CURSE OF THE FACELESS MAN (1958) resorts to the kind of mambo jumbo thankfully eschewed by the previous selection. Modern-day Naples is the site of archaeological exploration. The unearthing of an apparently petrified man leads to a fancifully reconstructed peplum legend: an Etruscan gladiator/slave named Quintillus Aurelius, denied the love of a patrician's daughter, had placed a curse on their restrictive society that caused the eruption of Mount Vesuvius. Resultingly, radioactive embalming fluid molded him into a state of living stone. Now uncovered, the faceless man (Bob Bryant) fully returns to life and attacks staff members of the Museum of Pompeii. (Actually, the Museum is played by Los Angeles' Griffith Park Observatory.)

A typically boring love triangle exists between the principals. Hunky Dr. Paul Mallon (Richard Anderson) has broken up with colleague Dr. Maria Fiorello (Adele Mara) in favor of artist Tina Enright (Elaine Edwards). That precarious triangle is further tilted by the revelation that Tina happens to be the reincarnation of the gladiator's long-lost Neapolitan temptress.

Directed by Edward L. Cahn, the production more closely resembles the work of Edward D. Wood. Crackpot theories,



© 1957 United Artists Corp.



wooden acting, and the lumbering, Golemlike monster—we're supposed to believe that no one can actually escape from him—render it a travesty. Paul Mallon is one of the least believable cinematic scientists ever. He scoffs at every train of thought in a supercilious, dismissive manner. When he interjects, "Something's driving that thing—something motivates it," one wishes that he was similarly inspired. Anderson brings little more to the role than indifference.

Lapses in logic abound. The Museum appears to be locked during the day, but accessible at night. Individual sequences betray a one-shot quality. At one point, the "unconscious" Tina clearly raises her head as she's being carried through a doorway by her driven, motivated Etruscan. The few positive elements, such as Gerald Fried's adrenaline pumping score, cannot surmount such absurdities as the intermittent flowery voiceover narration that strains to add depth to the proceedings. Like a typical Ed-Wooden effort, the product boasts more camp appeal than thrills.

The package concludes with a color British snocker *DOCTOR BLOOD'S COFFIN* (1961). While not the pick of the litter, it's certainly the most visceral entry. Dr. Peter Blood (Kieron Moore) returns to his native Cornish village. His father, Robert (Ian Hunter), is the town doctor, so Blood is afforded instant trust. What the villagers don't realize is that the tweedy young practitioner was expelled from his Viennese medical academy for attempting to transplant a living animal heart into the corpse of another animal.

Blood has so successfully ingratiated himself that not a single soul suspects him when a few of the locals turn up missing. He initiates a manipulative romance with his father's assistant, Linda Parker (Hazel Court). She's finally the one to see through his smug facade, but not soon enough to prevent an undesirable reunion—with her deceased husband, who has been resuscitated by Blood's experimentation.

The film is essentially a character study, with Moore plausibly obsessive in the title role. The doctor victimizes those he deems unworthy of life. The kind of people who hang around taverns instead of making something of themselves are grist for his mill. He's a true sociopath, unable to empathize with those he perceives as lesser beings. Moore's performance offers a condescending villain who delights in occasionally revealing his true nature. The scene in which Blood intimidates and threatens Linda in a tin mine demonstrates a Sadean streak.

*DOCTOR BLOOD'S COFFIN* is fairly gruesome for its vintage. There are several open-heart surgery sequences that attempt to compensate for the lack of cerebral drama. There's no attempt to approach the pathos of a film such as *THE VAMPIRE*, the filmmakers are content to peddle gory body parts whenever the plot becomes stolid. I'd have preferred another United Artists title to climax the

festivities: the studio's B&W Italian import *THE VAMPIRE AND THE BALLERINA* (1960). But overall, this set, if not as consistently entertaining as Volume One, provides a pleasing mix of chuckles and occasional chills.

The laserdisc collection spreads the quartet across six sides pressed in the CLV format. The films, given their age and low-budget histories, are in remarkably good condition. Seldom does the viewer catch a glimpse of speckling, artifacts, or stray markings. The first three display effective B&W contrasts. The fourth's original Eastman Color has faded somewhat, but that prevents the abundant reds from bleeding into distortion (red being the most problematic color for laser reproduction). The prints are all presented in full-frame, although *DOCTOR BLOOD's* opening credit crawl has been matted to approximately 1.66:1. None appear to be missing any significant picture information. The music and effects tracks for all four have been isolated on the analog channels. A color trailer preview for the British thriller is also included.

John F. Black

**THE NIGHT STALKER/  
THE NIGHT STRANGLER**  
Anchor Bay  
DVD, \$29.95

"Don't look now, baby, but Kolchak's coming back in style!" Truer words could not be spoken about Anchor Bay's new double-feature DVD of *THE NIGHT STALKER* and *THE NIGHT STRANGLER*.

Originally airing on TV in 1972, *THE NIGHT STALKER* is arguably one of the best horror features of the seventies. Darren McGavin's career-defining portrayal of the relentless low-rent reporter seeking to uncover the truth behind a series of bizarre vampire-like murders in Las Vegas made television history with the highest ratings ever for a made-for-TV movie at that time. Kolchak's determined efforts to convince the cover-munded authorities of evil among us were as frustratingly ineffective as his pleas to his editor (Simon Oakland, equally superb as Tony Vincenzo) to publish his stories intact. Richard Matheson's script (based on Jeff Rice's novel) expertly blends suspense with humor. This combination would be repeated not only in the *KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER* TV series but again some 20 years later for Chris Carter's *THE X-FILES* series, in which McGavin made several appearances in 1998 and 1999.

Not to be overlooked is Ralph Meeker, adding a fine performance as Kolchak's FBI friend Bernie Jenks. Coincidentally, Larry Linville appears as medical examiner Dr. Makurji and would later that year define his career as prissy military surgeon Major Frank Burns on the new TV series *M\*A\*S\*H*.

Item: At the conclusion of Kolchak and Bernie's poolside scene discussing vampires, there is a bizarre moment when Kolchak cocks his head, inexplica-



bly goes to a hotel phone, and immediately begins a conversation with his hospital informant. The audio of Kolchak being summoned to the phone is missing in true *X-FILES/NIGHT STALKER* fashion.

While the quality of *THE NIGHT STALKER* DVD is only slightly improved over its VHS counterpart, *THE NIGHT STRANGLER* benefits from a stunning improvement over its VHS release. Having been ousted from Vegas, the story follows Kolchak as he reunites with the gruff Tony Vincenzo in Seattle. Richard Matheson's script sends Kolchak down into Seattle's secret underground city to investigate a recurring cycle of unusual murders. Also on hand this time is an outstanding supporting cast, featuring John Carradine as the owner of the newspaper employing Kolchak and Vincenzo, Wally Cox as a helpful research expert, Margaret Hamilton (of *THE WIZARD OF OZ* fame), Al Lewis (Grandpa on *THE MUNSTERS*), Richard Anderson (Oscar Goldman on *THE SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN*), and JoAnn Pflug as Kolchak's love interest who can "move her hips faster than her mouth."

Not only does *THE NIGHT STRANGLER* equal its predecessor in chills, it surpasses it in humor, while benefiting tremendously from a color-corrected transfer that makes this a must-have disc for every Kolchak fan. The combination of higher resolution and richness of colors, particularly in the underground city scenes, far exceeds the dull flatness of last year's VHS release. A tip of the straw bird-feeder hat to Anchor Bay for truly bringing Kolchak back in style!

Michael D. Walker

**PERFORMANCE**  
Warner Bros. Home Video  
Two Sides CLV  
Laserdisc, \$34.95

Chas Devlin (James Fox) is not a very nice chap at all. He's the sort of fellow whose job it is to "convince" people to fall



in with the desires of his employer, Harry Flowers (Johnny Shannon). Chas' methods of persuasion are most effective, utilizing such conversational placations as acid-throwing, things-smashing and good ol' fashioned pummeling.

Harry's been having trouble convincing a local business owner, Joey Maddocks (Anthony Valentine), to merge with Flowers Enterprises. Upon hearing mention of Joey, Chas zealously volunteers to nudge him for Harry. Harry reminds Chas to "keep personal relations out of business," especially since Chas and Joey's relations "was double personal, right?" (Wink-wink.) Chas, never the dog to be tied (he prefers the dominant side in every situation), ignores Harry's orders, and heads down to Joey's office to razz 'im and take 'im in to Harry. Naturally, Harry's none too pleased with Chas' disobedience, and lectures him in front of all his associates, including the newly-merged (and thoroughly amused) Joey Maddocks. Chas walks out on Harry's diatribe, leaving Harry with a growling feeling of concern.

Chas comes home to a thrashed flat and a fist in the face. Joey and a couple of pals, on behalf of Harry, have come to teach Chas a lesson. They strip and belt-whip him severely, but he gets hold of his gun in the struggle, and with the exclamation, "I am the bullet," puts an end to Joey Maddocks.

Knowing full well that he's now in doubly serious Dutch with the boss, he packs a bag and hits the road. He stops to phone Harry, explaining the situation as "just an accident," and announces that he's going on the lam, and will be in touch soon. Harry's legal advisor and probable lover, Dennis (Anthony Morton), observes that Chas is a mad dog about to bite his owner, without even meaning to. "Pity he exists."

With a bucket of paint, Chas dyes his hair fire-engine red (presumably to make himself less conspicuous). He pops into a diner to wait for his outbound train, and overhears another patron telling his Mum about the rented room he's just

vacated in Notting Hill Gate, and the back rent he owes. This information seems to be potentially useful for young Chas, the Red. He heads out to the address, and is let in by the very beautiful and very stoned Pherber (Anita Pallenberg). Chas claims to be a traveling "juggler" and an old pal of the former tenant, and says he has come to pay the back rent and occupy the room. Pherber halfheartedly interrogates him while showing him around the house, perpetuating the awkward conversation mostly with flirtatious taunts and associative gibberish.

The flat, as it turns out, is owned by a freaky hippy named Turner (Mick Jagger). Turner's gone into a hedonistic hermit-style seclusion with his lovers, Pherber and Lucy (Michele Breton, cast for her androgynously close resemblance to Jagger), after a successful-but-short career as a rock superstar ("He had three number ones and two number twos and a number four.") Upset by the intrusion of an outsider, Turner informs Chas that he cannot stay. Chas insists that he needs this type of bohemian atmosphere to inspire his juggling act, and pleads with Turner to let him remain. Intrigued by the particular scent of horseshit emitting from Chas' desperate mouth, Turner obliges... for one night. Chas immediately mooches the phone (whatta flatmate!) and rings his pal Tony (Anthony Valentine) in order to obtain a phony passport for a hasty flight from the country.

The next morning, Chas makes his first truly wise decision and washes away the Ringling Bros. hairdo. Meanwhile, back in the garden, Pherber picks mushrooms and goes to prepare dinner, while Lucy whines about the new guy. She wants to know why Turner would ever let him stay, to which Pherber's enigmatic reply is, "He changed his mind."

Indeed. But Turner's cerebral identity problems are far too existential to be summarized so simply. For, as Pherber observes, Turner is "stuck." With the help of a psilocybin-enhanced dinner, Turner's set to change more than his own mind. He's out to break the physiological ties

that hold his world at its current standstill—and he's determined that within Chas' mind and body lie the means with which to do so. Chas is in Turner's world now. ("We push the buttons. He's the horror show.") Pitting Chas' "performance" against his own, Turner has decided that it is indeed "t me for a change"—a change that will affect every level of Chas' sexual, physical, and psychological identity.

Written by Donald Cammell, photographed by Nicolas Roeg, and codirected by both, *PERFORMANCE* was completed in 1968, but was deemed by Warner Bros. as too offensive for release and shelved. (It's a wonder they green-lighted it in the first place.) However, by 1970, we'd witnessed the Manson Family Special, and the Altamont Festival of Doom, and Warners decided to release the film to cash in on Mick Jagger's evil new image. In addition, androgyny and bisexuality had by that time become very chic, and *PERFORMANCE* was the first studio film to examine these issues in such a frank and non-exploitative fashion. Almost predictably, the film was seen by most critics as nothing short of revolting, and made several critics' worst film lists. Many complained that it was completely unintelligible and rightly so: every character speaks with a brutally thick accent, be it cockney, French, or... Mick Jaggerian. Not surprisingly, the theatrical run broke no records.

Originally inspired by Vladimir Nabokov's *Invitation to a Beheading*—in which a man meets his alter ego, with fatal results—the script was unfinished when the film began to roll, with much of the final polish applied on the go. Though neither director would ever claim the film as anything other than a 50/50 effort, it has over the years been suspected that this was really Cammell's baby. Not to say that Roeg didn't leave his fingerprints on the end result, the film is full of classic Roeg touches—subliminal edits, jarring flash-forwards and flashbacks, a casual and innocuous depiction of homosexuality, and his perennial obsession with idea/image associations. The film is rich with symbolism and literary reference, and dual imagery abounds—there's at least one mirror in every scene, for instance.

Though Warners' laser is far from a perfect presentation of the film—minor scratches and speckles pop up every now and again—it is by far the best video transfer to date. Fans will greatly welcome the enhanced color and clarity, the restoration of the original theatrical cut (all previous video releases were shorn of nearly two minutes, with colors washed out nearly to the point of non-existence), and the proper 1.85:1 aspect ratio. It's only a pity the film was never given the Special Edition treatment before Cammell's tragic suicide in 1996. We can only hope for a forthcoming special DVD edition with direct participation from Roeg, but don't hold your breath... pick this one up while you still can.

—Tony Strauss



**SON OF KONG**  
Image Entertainment  
Two Sides CLV  
Laserdisc, \$29.95

I've never been fond of sequels, but the few that I do find enjoyable are often those that wisely choose to venture off in a completely different direction from the original, acknowledging the futility in trying to follow a proven winner. Such is the case with RKO's 1933 *SON OF KONG*, the studio's hurried followup to the legendary *KING KONG*.

Humor is the dominant theme as we find Carl Denham (Robert Armstrong) confined to his room in the aftermath of Kong's destructive rampage through New York. Hounded with a flurry of lawsuits related to Kong, he wisely opts to sneak off to the South Seas with two other returning characters from Kong: Captain Englehorn (Frank Reicher) and the ever-faithful Charley the cook (Victor Wong). It isn't long before they find themselves in need of money and unwisely hook up with an estranged sea captain (John Marston) who tells them there is hidden treasure on Skull Island of all places!

Never mind that the natives (led by Noble Johnson, also of the original) make only a brief appearance and conveniently make no effort to protect the hidden treasure, which turns out to exist despite it originally being a ruse by the trouble-making captain. (Likewise for the lack of

with itself and the genre while still giving us the impressive sets and special effects magic of Willis O'Brien and his masterful technicians.

While Helen Mack is certainly no substitute for Fay Wray, she does manage to do a fine job though without many opportunities to scream. The scene prior to her introduction has a nice touch to it as Denham watches a musical monkey ensemble. One can easily imagine him thinking of Kong and how he attempted to commercialize the giant ape in an equally ridiculous manner. Later, Denham receives the ultimate symbolic gesture in regard to his treatment of Kong. He does a good deed by bandaging baby Kong's injured finger, but waxes on about how guilty he feels. Once he finishes applying the bandage, he quite literally and appropriately receives the middle finger from the ape in return.

The climax of the film also makes use of symbolism. Immediately after Denham discovers the treasure, the island is wracked by an earthquake and baby Kong saves his life in a final heroic effort. Research efforts thus far have provided me with no precursor to this scene, but for a lightweight film, the imagery of young Kong's hand protruding from the water has had a profound influence on modern films as diverse as *DELIVERANCE* and *TERMINATOR II: JUDGMENT DAY*. Whether by design or accident, the light-hearted *SON OF KONG*'s message is ultimately a bleak one: that man always destroys that which he touches. Not bad at all for a rush-job sequel!

—Michael D. Walker

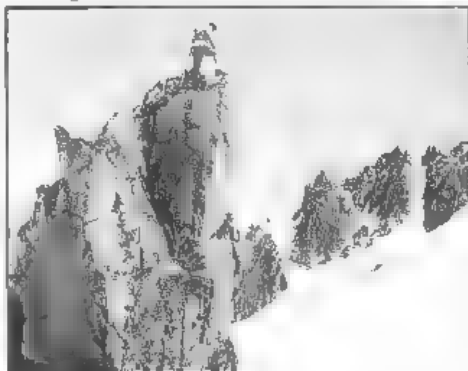
**THIRD MAN ON THE MOUNTAIN**  
Walt Disney Home Video  
Two Sides CLV  
Laserdisc, \$29.95

Visitors to Disneyland have probably never given much thought as to why there's a rollercoaster ride in the park called the Matterhorn, built to resemble a scaled-down, snow-capped recreation of the real Swiss mountain. Well, lo and behold, there's actually a movie connection, only the connection is to a Disney movie that most people have probably never even heard of: *THIRD MAN ON THE MOUNTAIN* (1959). It seems that Walt Disney had taken a great fancy to Switzerland and was looking for an appropriate property to be set there involving mountain climbing. He found it with James Ramsey Ullman's 19XX novel *Banner in the Sky*. The production was assigned to director Ken Annakin, who would later be responsible for one of the studio's best features: *SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON* (1960). Like that movie, *THIRD MAN* features two of Disney's promising young talents of the time, James MacArthur and Janet Munro (who went on to appear in the 1962 British sci-fi favorite *THE DAY THE EARTH CAUGHT FIRE*, and, sadly, died when she was only 38).

MacArthur is Rudi Matt, son of a legendary Alpine guide who died trying to

climb the Citadel (the story's substitute name for the Matterhorn), having succumbed to exposure while trying to protect the client he had taken on the trip. In the 16 years since that event, no man in the village of Kurta has dared attempt the trek, though Rudi feels it is his destiny to carry on his dad's legacy. His mother (Nora Swinburne) has other ideas and so Rudi spends his days working as a dishwasher in the company of Teo (Laurence Naismith), who survived that fateful climb but, due to his injuries, must now work as a cook.

A noted English mountain climber, Captain John Winter (Michael Rennie), arrives in the village with the intent of climbing the Citadel, and Rudi finally sees his dream of an ascent up the seemingly unscaleable peak coming true. Rudi's grouchy uncle (James Donald) will not hear of it and thereby lies the conflict. Just when all seems lost, Winter takes off for the climb accompanied by Emil Saxo (Herbert Lom), a belligerent guide from the rival village of Broli, prompting Rudi to ignore his uncle's orders and enlist as



Winter's porter, making him the "Third Man on the Mountain." Just who among these adventurers is the first to make it to the top? Well, the answer, refreshingly, is not as clear cut and Disneylike as one might expect.

Shot on location in the town of Zermatt, with breathtaking views of the surrounding mountains, this was a pet project that accomplished what it set out to do as entertainment, but fell into that problematic area of so many of Uncle Walt's serious live-action films. With the Disney stamp on it, most adult audiences assumed this was for children and stayed away, while the youthful moviegoers, who usually preferred the company's comedies or animated films, figured this was too sophisticated for them. Alas, the movie was not popular and, in an effort to wipe away the stigma of failure, even had its name changed to that of the novel when it premiered on the Disney television show in 1963.

*THIRD MAN* is, in fact, a most admirable film, very strong in its characterizations, offering wonderful parts to all of its principals. MacArthur is a most engaging hero, focused on the conquest of the peak, then learning a valuable lesson in humanity along the way. Munro is wonderful as his plucky love interest



a mother Kong to beget baby Kong or any of the other lapses in logic.) In every way this is a light-hearted romp that has fun

who is no slouch in the mountain climbing department herself, adding great energy, heart, and humor to the mostly serious storytelling. Rennie makes for a masochistic adventurer, understanding MacArthur's need to escape from his dead-end life. Lom, as the most unsavory of the film's characters, is not a villain per se, but a difficult and cantankerous soul hardened by his competitive nature. As MacArthur's main obstacle to his goal, Donald turns out to be a man afraid to let anyone accomplish what he himself has all along desired in his heart.

Also impressive is just how much of the mountain climbing is actually done by the cast members themselves, with Annakin cleverly splicing in extreme long shots of professional climbers with footage of the actors scaling over cliffs and crags. An extensive climbing course was given to all the principal performers with the exception of Lom, who refused to participate, a decision which ostracized him from the others which was only fitting considering the outsider nature of his character. MacArthur, on the other hand, took the assignment to extremes, actually scaling the Matterhorn itself much to the discomfort of the nervous studio. Perhaps his undisciplined behavior accounts for the presence on the set by his real mom, Helen Hayes, who makes a fleeting cameo as a tourist.

The Disney laserdisc of *THIRD MAN ON THE MOUNTAIN* contains an occasional scratch and some speckles on the second side, but they are minor. The picture is full frame, not letterboxed, and there are no extras, once again showing the lack of imagination of so many packagers when it comes to the format. Not only could they have slapped on the theatrical trailer but perhaps the *WONDERFUL WORLD OF COLOR* preview announcing the television airing under its alternate title.

—Barry Monash

**THE V.I.P.s**  
**Warner Home Video**  
**Two Sides CLV**  
**Laserdisc, \$39.95**

MGM/Image has released a letterboxed laserdisc of Anthony Asquith's elegant drama *THE V.I.P.s* (1963). The plot, or lack thereof, suggests a high concept ambience that might be summarized as "Grand Hotel goes to the airport." London's Gatwick is enveloped by a dense (possibly metaphorical) fog, necessitating a protracted stopover before flight schedules can be resumed. Most of the denizens who gather in the V.I.P. facilities are ostensibly wealthy and secure. Yet, beneath their dazzling facades, lurks a bevy of personal and financial problems.

Frances Andros (Elizabeth Taylor) is planning to leave her dogmatic billionaire husband Paul (Richard Burton), and replace him with the earthier charms of the aging gigolo Marc Champselle (Louis Jourdan). Max Buda (Orson Welles) is an

expatriate cineaste who is privately confronting severe tax consequences. Australian entrepreneur Les Mangrum (Rod Taylor) is desperately maneuvering to raise enough capital to block a hostile takeover bid for his company. Maggie Smith portrays Miss Mead, the secretary



who is smitten with him. The befuddled pilot-popping Duchess of Brighton (Margaret Rutherford, in an Oscar-winning performance) has secured employment in America to help her contribute to the maintenance of her English manor. Brighton sounding about as profitable as Grand Fenwick, another impoverished 1963 Duchy ruled by Rutherford, in *THE MOUSE ON THE MOON*. Elsa Martinelli incompressibly draws fourth billing in the superficial role of Max Buda's actress/protege, Gloria Gritti. Amusing cameos are contributed by David Frost as a publicity reporter and Stringer Davis. Rutherford's real-life husband and costar of her Miss Marple films, as a genteel airport hotel staffer.

The theme of personal crisis that permeates *THE V.I.P.s*, under different hands, might have descended to the level of melodrama. But director Asquith and writer Terence Rattigan, who previously collaborated on the British classics *THE WINSLOW BOY* (1948) and *THE BROWNING VERSION* (1951) among other mutual efforts, have chosen to take the high road with this material. The principal characters always remain sympathetic in spite of their individual concerns. Some of them, such as the Andros couple, are able to transform themselves credibly and movingly. Others, such as the Duchess and the movie mogul, successfully find a way to pool their resources. True, the film was old-fashioned even back in 1963, but it still entertains as a tasteful character study. While not a classic, it remains sufficiently entertaining to warrant an occasional layover.

The laserdisc is letterboxed at approximately 2:50:1, contrasting the teeming airport crowds with the studied refinement of the various V.I.P. amenities. Although evidencing slight grain, the color values are consistently pleasing, if not robust. The image only occasionally betrays an artifact or an oval reel-change marking. Overall, the vintage materials are in satisfactory condition. The running time of 119 minutes is spread over

two CLV recorded sides, forcing an awkward side break in the middle of a conversation. There's also no room remaining for extras of any kind, not even a trailer preview.

John F. Black

**FLESH FOR FRANKENSTEIN/  
 BLOOD FOR DRACULA**

**Criterion**  
**DVD, \$39.95 each**

"To know death, Otto, you have to fuck life in the gal bladder." Thus spake Baron Frankenstein (Udo Kier) in Paul Morrissey's delightfully perverse and outrageous 1974 *FLESH FOR FRANKENSTEIN* (aka *ANDY WARHOL'S FRANKENSTEIN*). And for anyone who ever wondered if Kier hadn't read the line backwards—since his amatory moves are made on the body of his female zombie—the audio commentary not only reveals that indeed he had, but that these many years later Kier now quotes himself using the correct reading. This is just one of the intriguing and entertaining joys of Criterion's special presentation of the first of Morrissey's two great seventies horror films.

Originally released with an X rating (as was its 1974 companion, *BLOOD FOR DRACULA*), *FRANKENSTEIN* was (and is) a deliberately over-the-top, anything to outrage product of the new freedom afforded filmmakers by the MPAA ratings system. As such, it is very much a part of the wave of filmmaking that gave us Schlesinger's *MIDNIGHT COWBOY* (1969), Russell's *THE DEVILS* (1971), Kubrick's *A CLOCKWORK ORANGE* (1971), and Bertolucci's *LAST TANGO IN PARIS* (1973, the source of Morrissey's "gal bladder" line), while at the same time being a deliberate subversion of this select group of "respectable" X-rated movies. Morrissey's film is almost a reaction to this kind of new freedom. He exploits all his sex and gore (of which there is no shortage, even by today's standards) in a wholly "unrespectable" manner designed to both parody and critique, while also taking a poke at the viewer as voyeur. (Just how superior can one feel when one has shelled out money for the express purpose of seeing a film that delivers *exactly* what it purports to deliver?). It would, however, be a mistake to view *FLESH FOR FRANKENSTEIN* as a film with a too deadly earnest purpose, since it is first and foremost a blackly comedic fairy tale that is at once outrageously (albeit sickly) funny and sumptuously gorgeous. That it criticizes and instructs as it entertains is mostly an added attraction.

The film is, of course, Morrissey's rethinking of the standard Frankenstein film—with the perverse elements laid on with a trowel. His Baron Frankenstein is more an incipient Hitler than a Colin Clive or Peter Cushing. (Every time the Baron rhapsodizes about creating his "pure" race of zombies to replace the "trash" that inhabits the planet, Claudio Gizzi's original score gives way to the



strains of Wagner's TANNHAUSER.) This mad doctor is also amazingly perverse—repulsed by sex (but turned on by a nice incision and knowing a hot gall bladder when he sees one), married to his own nymphomaniacal sister, and father to a pair of creepily mute (the result of the child actors' inability to speak English) children. There is just plain nothing normal about Morrissey's Frankenstein, and Udo Kier's rivetingly stylized performance never lets us forget it. The one thing he does share with his cinematic predecessors is an alarming degree of incompetence. In search of his sexually powerful "Serbian ideal" head (with "the perfect nasum") for his male zombie, the man mistakes a wanna-be monk for a major cocksman and unwittingly creates a somewhat pious and completely asexual being as a result—as deft a parody of the old "abnormal brain" schtick as could be imagined and perfect for the film's critique of its own X-rated freedom.



Stylized and stylistic to a fault, Morrissey's film is both timeless and a perfect evocation of its time. An outgrowth of his improvisational movies for the Andy Warhol Factory, FLESH FOR FRANKENSTEIN differs in that it was shot from a script, but retains much of the fresh quality of the improvised films. Morrissey wrote the film on a daily basis, with the cast having no idea what they would be required to say the next day, even if they knew the plot and situations in broad terms. The upshot is an agreeable freshness from the inspired, if somewhat loopy (Joe Dallesandro in period Germany?) cast. Despite this, there is nothing about the film that seems slipshod, and the gorgeous (if grotesque) imagery of Morrissey and cinematographer Luigi Kuveiler (some of whose "secrets" Morrissey reveals on the commentary track) is beyond criticism.

Originally released in 3D (Spacevision), the DVD presentation (basically, a trans-

fer of Criterion's earlier laser releases in the newer format) eschews (at Morrissey's request) this gimmick. Instead, we are treated to a sumptuous rendering of the film, with crystal clarity and a proper 2.35:1 letterboxing. The supplements make for a nice all-around package, with Paul Morrissey and Udo Kier offering entertaining observations and anecdotes on the commentary track. Film historian Maurice Yacowar is on hand in the commentary, too, and while some of his readings of the film seem a little too much in terms of hidden meanings and film-school jargon, many of his insights are remarkably to the point and interesting.

The second of Morrissey's three-week, \$300,000 wonder horror films is even better than FLESH FOR FRANKENSTEIN. Just as outrageous in tone and concept, BLOOD FOR DRACULA is nonetheless a work of more obvious—if often ambiguous—serious intent. Wild and woolly as it is, the film's primary tone is one of loss, a sadness for the passing of an era, and it pervades the film far more than its deliberate excesses, its typically mishmash casting (accents ranging from German to Polish to Italian to English to Joe Dallesandro's patented Brooklynese), and its deliciously quirky dialogue. Unfortunately, the DRACULA film lacked the promotional gimmick of widescreen 3D and received neither the wide release, nor the attention of Morrissey's FRANKENSTEIN—a situation not helped at all by its subsequent incarnation in a 96-minute, R-rated version that, not surprisingly, made hash out of the plot and helped cause the film to be considered the lesser of the two films for years. Fortunately, recent years have seen BLOOD FOR DRACULA restored to its full, perverse, 103-minute length.

The time frame of BLOOD FOR DRACULA is more precise than that of FLESH FOR FRANKENSTEIN. It is very clearly the Roaring Twenties (Elinor Glynn's "infamous" novel, *Three Weeks*, has just been published) and Dracula (Udo Kier) has fallen victim to the "wicked" times. In Morrissey's take on the vampire legend, Dracula cannot subsist on just any old blood; it must be 100% grade-A virgin blood, or else he has a reaction not unlike that of someone who chugs a quart of Scotch (or, considering the onscreen results, a couple of bottles of Burgundy). Well, the morals having changed with the times, virgins seem to have become a rare commodity—even in the wilds of Transylvania. With this in mind, his bossy servant, Anton (Arno Juerging), decrees they must travel to Italy, where (owing to the Catholic country needing "virgins" for their marriage ceremonies) there will be virgins aplenty. So with coffin ("That will look suspicious!") perched atop their car, the pair set out for Italy, only to run afoul of the very broke, very corrupt, and very morally dubious Di Fiore family. (A peasant informs our heroes, "Oh, I'm sure they are religious, they have a very nice house.") Far from virginal, the two

marriageable Di Fiore daughters are not on any apparent lesbian lovers, but enjoy the services of Marxist-spouting handyman, Marion (Joe Dallesandro), who also disapproves of their plans for one of them to marry the Count. "Right now he's a disgusting person with money. After the revolutions, he'll be a disgusting person without money," says Marion, who also wonders, "If he's lookin' for a virgin, what's he doing with you two whores?"

Frequently hysterically funny ("My body cannot take this treatment! The blood of these whores is killing me!" exclaims Dracula after an unfortunate attempt at vampirizing the second daughter), BLOOD FOR DRACULA is also one of the most gorgeous—and strangely sweet—horror films of all time. The key lies in Morrissey's penchant for populating his films with good-looking people and then making them look even better by carefully lighting them. (The deliberately unrealistic lighting keeps all the faces in highlight for most of the film.) The lack of 3D and CinemaScope also allows for greater freedom on the part of Morrissey and cinematographer Luigi Kuveiler, and they take full advantage. BLOOD FOR DRACULA is an altogether remarkable work and probably Morrissey's best film.

Like FLESH FOR FRANKENSTEIN, the DVD is accompanied by commentaries from Morrissey and Kier, along with Maurice Yacowar. If anything, the commentaries of director and star are better than their superb ones on FRANKENSTEIN, but again Yacowar tends to go off the deep end, finding significance in even the smallest of the film's aspects. Just how much validity one gives his remarks is a personal call, though at times his analysis is very nearly brilliant.

—Ken Hanke

**HALLOWEEN: H20**  
Dimension Home Video  
Two Sides CLV  
Laserdisc, \$39.95

Twenty years after the unforgettable original, the much-bled Halloween series given to us by maestro John Carpenter finally has produced a sequel worthy of its holiday title, although first glance may have you thinking otherwise.

One of the riskier moves was hiring director Steve Miner. With such atrocities as FRIDAY THE 13TH PART TWO (1981) and THREE (1982), HOUSE (1986) WARLOCK (1991), and LAKE PLACID (1999) all bearing his name, the enlisting of his services did nothing to gain any positive publicity for the project. Fortunately, the film relies far more on the strength of its script and actors than its director.

Laurie Strode (Jamie Lee Curtis) has faked her own death and assumed a new identity to escape her past, and is now the headmistress and English teacher at a California boarding school. Her 17-year-old son John (Josh Hartnett) lives with her, attending the school and hoping to

gain some semblance of a normal life in a single parent household. In a brief prologue (featuring 3RD ROCK FROM THE SUN's Joseph Gordon Levitt as the first victim), killer Michael Myers discovers his sister's hiding place and prepares to finish the bloody work he began in 1978.

A shot of Laurie teaching her class not only parallels a scene from the original, but achieves the same purpose of providing the film's ultimate metaphor. A class discussion on Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* addresses Henry confronting his monster. Laurie must confront her own monster before finding peace. The sooner she does this the less chance there is of lives being lost. Also, absolute closure to the series is provided with a startling, unexpected finale. The only way to resurrect Michael Myers now is to find a good head doctor... and I don't mean a shrink.

Reprising her role, Curtis brings a new vitality and strength to the series in an exceptional performance. Indeed, there are no contrivances to be found in her character at all. Laurie Strade is now older, wiser, and ready to face the demons of her past. Another real treat is watching Curtis acting opposite her mother Janet Leigh (Marion Crane from the real PSYCHO). The two first appeared on screen together 19 years ago in Carpenter's classic THE FOG (1980), and it's only fitting that their second



Photo: Thomas F. Cop

teaming comes in this vehicle spawned from Carpenter's original.

The Dimension laser is letterboxed at approximately 2.35:1. While the framing works well, the color balance leaves a little to be desired in certain scenes. Some of the black hues momentarily shift to dark blue, for example, and the plaid colors of Joseph Gordon Levitt's shirt seem to shift from medium orange to a dark butterscotch in the course of a single shot. The digital sound is well-mixed, providing adequate peaks during the louder sound cues, which occur at the many "gotcha!" moments in the film. The single disc is indexed with 14 chapters and contains no extras, which is a shame because the film's short running time of 86 minutes would have allowed for some

—Brooke Perry

## THE SPIRIT OF MICKEY

Image Entertainment

Two Sides CLV

Laserdisc, \$29.95

This collection of 11 1928-1948 shorts has the mark of a Disney Channel special, from a running time seemingly tailored to fit a 90-minute slot, to the use of MICKEY MOUSE CLUB animation as bumpers between classic films. Title cards have been removed, and the beginnings of some shorts are overlapped by groan-worthy introductions by Disney characters. No release dates or directorial credits are provided.

At the dawn of the color era, Mickey became reduced to a supporting character in his own films, his increasing importance as a corporate symbol and cultural ambassador resulted in all risky behavior being delegated to Donald Duck, Goofy, and Pluto. However, three color films presented here star a Mouse who wears the indomitable bravado of his B&W years.

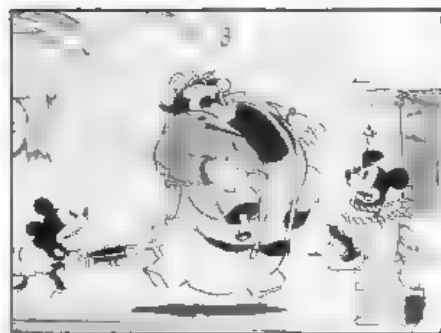
THE BAND CONCERT (Wilfred Jackson, 1935) captures Mickey at his most puissant, overpowering the elements in a fashion he was only permitted to dream about in FANTASIA (1940). Conducting a literal whirlwind symphony, his black dot eyes roam wildly about his wide white forehead as he strikes commanding, Stokowski-like poses. The perennial favorite THRU THE MIRROR (Dave Hand, 1936) melds the surreal sensibility of early Disney with imagery gleaned from Lewis Carroll. In THE WORM TURNS (Ben Sharpsteen, 1937) Mickey plays a mad scientist who reverses the cat-chases mouse/dog chases cat/dog catcher chases dog cartoon food chain with an atomizer full of a chemical "courage builder." The animation of Mickey in this film is stunning, his figure suffused with authority, titrating his mysterious potion with a Faustian determination that anticipates the Witch's transformation sequence in SNOW WHITE, released later the same year.

LEND A PAW (1941), MICKEY AND THE SEAL (1948), CANINE CADDY (1941), and MR. MOUSE TAKES A TRIP (1940) are actually Pluto vehicles, with Mickey consigned to passive roles. ORPHAN'S PICNIC (1936) recapitulates elements of ORPHAN'S BENEFIT (1934), pitting the early, feral Donald Duck against a horde of impish, miniature Mickey lookalikes, while relegating Mickey himself to the background.

STEAMBOAT WILLIE (1928) appears trimmed of a sequence of Mickey picking up a sow and using her nipples as accordion keys. (The storyboard drawing for this sequence can be accessed on Chapter 6, Frames 29947-9 of the Laserdisc box set MICKEY MOUSE: THE BLACK AND WHITE YEARS, accompanied by the typewritten description "Mickey holding pig so that he can play her tits like keys." Honest!)

Small black flecks and bits of dust imbedded in the emulsion are apparent throughout the thirties cartoons, they cry

out for the digital restoration that SNOW WHITE enjoyed. Print damage aside, the quality of the transfer is for the most part excellent, with sharp detail and radiant, stained glass hues. The exceptions are



MICKEY'S SURPRISE PARTY (a Natisco sponsored promotional film, for exhibition at the 1939 World's Fair) and I FEND A PAW, which display a dark, brownish palette. The soft image of the made-for-TV animation on enhances the crisp definition and prismatic glow of the early Technicolor film stock.

THE SPIRIT OF MICKEY is kind of odd, compiled with little regard for Disney's artistic heritage. There's nothing wrong with classic animation as children's programming, but I'm convinced that viewers of all ages would enjoy these films in complete form, supported by background information.

—Michael Draine

## BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

Criterion

DVD, \$39.95

Jean Cocteau's 1946 feature BEAUTY AND THE BEAST may be one of the most influential films ever shot. It was lensed in postwar France, and Cocteau, and the film's producer, Andre Paulve, had a hard time financing the picture, even though Cocteau's previous BLOOD OF A POET (1931) had met with critical applause. The film was suggested by Jean Marais, who played the dual roles of Avonant and the Beast. It's a wonderful film in virtually every way, with some of the most pronounced and arresting visuals ever presented on the silver screen. But what makes it more interesting is just how much it has influenced cinema itself, particularly BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA (1992) and THE HAUNTING (1999). The image of the Beast standing in an ornate doorway, his shirt torn and smoking from the blood of a victim, looks almost identical to a publicity still from Hammer's 1961 classic THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF, suggesting that director Terence Fisher may have been more affected by Cocteau than Frank Borzage. Tim Burton's SLEEPY HOLLOW (1999) contains more than one reference to Cocteau's archetypal fantasy, whose view of the Beast as a lionheaded monstrosity is forever stamped into the consciousness of film viewers.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST is based on the 18th-century fairy tale "La Belle et la



Bete," by Madame Leprince de Beaumont. It concerns a girl who exchanges her own life for that of her father's after he mistakenly picks a rose that belongs to a hideous beast. Her beauty and tenderness enslaves the Beast, and the two fall in love. The story is contained in its entirety on the disc itself.

Francis Ford Coppola admitted in 1992 that this film was a major influence on *BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA*. Comparing scenes, it becomes obvious that this is true. Key scenes and set designs are so similar, in fact, that one could accuse Coppola of theft. For instance, the sconces in Coppola's film are held by arms protruding from walls. Cocteau's 1946 classic goes one step further: the arms move and contain a spirit of their own. In Coppola's *DRACULA*, vampire women come up through the bed in a bundle of bedsheets. In *BEAUTY AND THE BEAST*, Beauty magically appears through the wall in a bundle of dresses.



In *THE HAUNTING*, one of director Jan De Bont's ghostly manifestations employs faces on woodwork springing to animation. In *BEAUTY*, this is commonplace. Beast's castle is alive with statues and faces and appendages. Statuesque heads follow Beauty and the Beast as they move about the rooms and carry on conversations. Eyes glow with vitality. In both films, bed covers move of their own accord. In addition, the large and sinister house of *THE HAUNTING* contains furniture and adornments that appear to be gryphons and other mythical animals, much like those in *BEAUTY*.

But Cocteau's animated poem is superior to its imitators. It has richly conceived characters and set pieces. The acting is good (particularly from Marais and Josette Day), the direction crisp, the camerawork soft and gentle, the dialogue smart. And, to top it off, it has lost none of its creepy effects. The Beast's first appearance, leaping from the bushes before a wary traveler, eyes glowing, mouth snarling, retains its horror today.

Criterion's DVD is a fine example of film restoration, especially compared to the Embassy video release. While there are still a few scratches and jumps on the image, the transfer captures the colorful intensity of Cocteau's direction. (Previously released prints were washed out and hard to see, with the soft focus completely obliterated.) The sound track has some audible pops and cracks. In addition to a fine transfer, the DVD offers audio commentary by film historian Arthur Knight. In the tradition of Criterion commentary tracks, Knight never sounds like he was thrust unprepared into a room in which the film is playing. Criterion's disc also contains an episode of the TV program *CINEMATIC EYE* dedicated to Cocteau's masterpiece.

Chris Workman

**THE HOWLING**  
Image Entertainment  
Side One CLV  
Sides Two, Three, Four CAV  
Laserdisc, \$69.95

Amidst the mad slasher heyday, the early eighties saw a strange proliferation in the number of werewolf films being made. Among the entries are Neil Jordan's classy *THE COMPANY OF WOLVES* (1984) and the ultimately cheesy John Landis vehicle *AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON* (1981). But for the absolute best of the bunch—and the one that started it all—you need look no further than Joe Dante's 1980 classic *THE HOWLING*.

A TV anchorwoman, shaken from a bizarre incident occurring during a news story investigation, decides to spend some time at the forest retreat of a popular psychiatrist. Little does she know that this pastoral scene is actually a refuge for its not-so-kind-y inhabitants...werewolves! In spinning this low-budget tale, Dante's wonderful casting ranges from Dee Wallace (as the anchorwoman), her husband Christopher Stone, Dennis Dugan, and Patrick Macnee (as the psychiatrist) to genre kings Kenneth Tobey, John Carradine, Dick Miller, and Kevin McCarthy. Be sure to watch for cameos by Roger Corman and *Scarlet Street*'s own Crimson Chronicle, Forry Ackerman.

A new widescreen transfer preserves the original 1.66:1 theatrical aspect ratio. Side One is presented in CLV, with Sides Two, Three, and Four in CAV, allowing makeup FX hounds to freeze-frame through Rob Bottin's jaw-dropping transformation sequences (and the nude scene featuring Elizabeth Brooks, for more daring viewers). The disc is indexed at 95 chapters for the film and 20 chapters for the supplement.

The original color tones of the film have thankfully been restored. The deep blues of the nighttime forest scenes and the harsh orange light coming through the blinds of the doctor's office now look richer than they originally did in the theater. There are, however, some spots where the dark grain of the exterior shots becomes readily evident (as found in

Chapter 59, for example). The audio mix is nice and even overall, but several harsh peaks occurred (usually during the growling sound effects) while monitoring on digital headphones.

The real joy of this package is the supplement. Analog Track One features a lively and engaging commentary by Dante and stars Dee Wallace Stone, Christopher Stone, and Robert Picardo. As this was recorded shortly before Christopher Stone's untimely death, it makes hearing his anecdotes and observations all the more worthwhile. It is a shame though, that lovely actress Elizabeth Brooks couldn't be part of the commentary, as she now, sadly, is also gone.

Analog Track Two features the eerie musical score from composer Pino Donaggio. For those who weren't fortunate enough to pick up the rare Varese Sarabande soundtrack album, this is truly manna from the heavens, as it includes several cues not available on that original vinyl pressing.

Side Four begins with the letterboxed theatrical trailer for the film, followed by a series of 35 deleted scenes. Dante comments on these scenes (totaling nearly 11 minutes) on Analog Track One while the film soundtrack appears on the digital channels. A hilarious outtake reel comes next, followed by an interview with stop-motion animator David Allen. This segment highlights his effects which, with the exception of one brief dissolve, were totally excised from the film's final cut. To top it all off, the complete John Sayles shooting script is featured with the original hand-drawn storyboards on the backs of the pages by Dante himself. The disc allows the viewer the option of reading the entire script or skipping through to see Dante's artwork only. Also, be sure to keep watching past the color bars. As with any Dante film, he rewards the Chosen who stay through the end of the credits. And this time, he does it using two different audio channels!

—Brooke Perry



**DOC SAVAGE: THE MAN OF BRONZE**  
Warner Home Video  
Two Sides CLV  
Laserdisc, \$34.95

When *DOC SAVAGE: THE MAN OF BRONZE* (1975) was being made it was hailed as the first of a series of film ad-

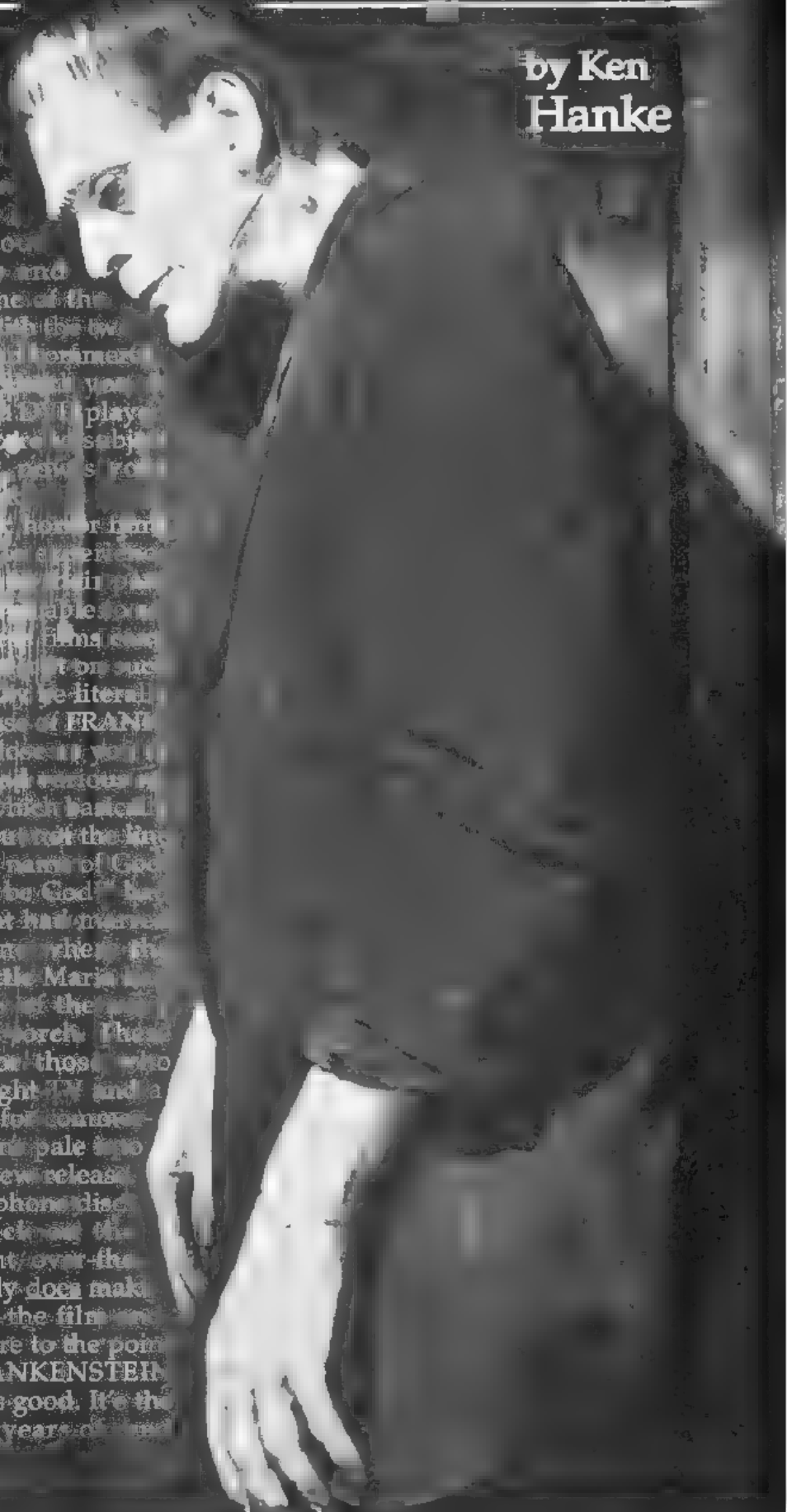
*Continued on page 72*

# THE MOST OF FRANKENSTEIN

**M**r. Ken Hanke feels it would be a little unkind to present this review without just a word of friendly warning. We're about to examine the DVD release of **FRANKENSTEIN**, a film of genres that ought to create genre after its own image without reckoning upon censor boards and preservationists. Its history is one of the strangest tales ever told. It deals with the great mysteries of creation, but all I can think it will thrill you. It may even drive you to purchase a DVD player. So if any of you feel you do not care to subject your finances to such a taxing and possibly chance to, well, we warned you.

Who among admirers of classic horror film would not give much to be able to see one of the most beloved movies of the genre for the first time again? The ability to live that thrill of seeing one of the films completely fresh? What price could be put on such an experience? And while that may be literally impossible, Universal's DVD release of **FRANKENSTEIN** (1931) is probably as close as you're going to get. In the past, there have been releases of the restored version, which basically meant that the missing footage (but not the film itself) of Colin Clive's "Oh, in the name of God, Now I know what it feels like to be God" has replaced the awful jump cut that had marred the film for years, and the scene where the Monster accidentally drowns little Maria has been put back along with some of the most sadistic scenes of Fritz Lang's work. These seemed remarkable enough for those who knew the film only from late night TV and a variety of battered prints, albeit for commercial. But these earlier restorations pale to insignificance compared to this new release. Clive's line—taken from the Vitaphone disc of its original release—is back on the soundtrack in all its overthought, over-the-top glory. (And that one line really does make a difference that enhances both the film and the actor's performance.) But more to the point is the overall presentation. **FRANKENSTEIN** has never looked so rounded this good. It's the cinematic equivalent of seeing years of

by Ken Hanke





**THE LODGER**

*The Uninvited*

*The Beast With Five Fingers*

**MURDER & MAYHEM**

Great Horror Scores from Hollywood's Golden Age



8.225063

## Murder & Mayhem

Suites from *The Lodger*,  
*The Beast with Five Fingers* and *The Uninvited*.

Hugo Friedhofer's melancholic score to quintessential Ripper fiend "The Lodger" is a choice selection of cuts sure to delight. Max Steiner lends a hand with his creepy soundtrack for "The Beast With Five Fingers" and to round things out, Victor Young's haunting soundtrack to "The Uninvited" completes this trio, of terrors fresh from Marco Polo's House of Horrors.

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**LEFT:** Yearning for the light, the Frankenstein Monster (Boris Karloff) embodies the “verticality” of *FRANKENSTEIN* (1931) on the extraordinarily vertical tower set. **RIGHT:** “Oh, in the name of God! Now I know what it feels like to be God!” Colin Clive (surrounded by Edward Van Sloan and John Boles, with Karloff on the table and Dwight Frye hovering in the background) at last speaks the famous line again.

cleaned away from an Old Master painting, revealing the clarity and brilliance of what lies beneath. It is indeed like seeing *FRANKENSTEIN* for the first time.

The most startling aspect of seeing this beautifully cleaned-up and remastered DVD with its restorative touches is the immediacy of the imagery. The film may have once seemed a bit of a museum piece—a little on the antique side. Much like *DRACULA* (1931), *FRANKENSTEIN* has always seemed almost outside the realm of movies—something iconic and oddly special that just “is.” The new presentation, however, takes the film out of the museum and makes it a vibrant, living thing. There is at once a greater sense that what we are watching is happening *now*, and the events and characters suddenly seem more real even in their wondrously stylized—and stylish—way. The film almost seems bigger than it ever did before. The conscious artistry of James Whale’s camera movements and invariably on-target choice of angles is more clearly evident, as is what *GODS AND MONSTERS* (1998) director Bill Condon (in the companion documentary) aptly calls the film’s “verticality.” (*FRANKENSTEIN* is very much a vertically moving film, made very precisely of upwards and downwards movement.) Perhaps nowhere is this more evident than in the well-known shot of the Monster reaching for the sunlight—the pristine image presented on the DVD has a power that is truly staggering and awesome in its symbolic implications. Even on a television screen, the viewer gets the sense of the overpowering size of the imagery and the idea behind it. Seen in this manner, the film is blessed with many such revelatory moments. No longer is *FRANKENSTEIN* a film that seems more important as concerns the evolution of James Whale than anything else. Here it is central and essential to his work overall. In short—It’s Alive!

But don’t give all the credit to the restoration and presentation—there has to be something there worth all this bother to begin with, and *FRANKENSTEIN* has more than a little of this something. In many ways, time has actually been kind to the film in a most unexpected way. The vagueness of its time period presented has ultimately become a plus. Set in some never-never time between the late 1800s and 1931, the film has sometimes been labeled confused on this issue. Certainly, most of the fashions—especially the

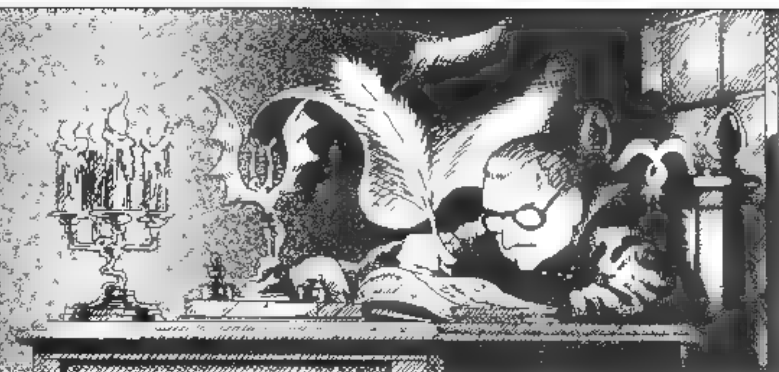
women’s clothes—are true to the year in which the film was made, as are the scenes at the medical school (Women training to be doctors?) However, many other aspects of the film—anything involving the peasants, for example, and the use of candles in some scenes—hail from an earlier period. In some interesting way, time has caught up with this aspect of *FRANKENSTEIN*. Modern filmmakers such as David Lynch (1986’s *BLUE VELVET*), Ken Russell (1988’s *LAIR OF THE WHITE WORM*), and Tim Burton (1990’s *EDWARD SCISSORHANDS*) have deliberately made films that mix periods in just this manner to create a separate kind of “anytime,” and in so doing have perhaps inadvertently made *FRANKENSTEIN* seem a part of this approach and more modern now than it did, say, 25 or 30 years ago. And that is as it should be, since, with its deliberate use of shock effects *FRANKENSTEIN*, is literally the first modern horror film. The mismatched periods definitely set the film apart, affording it an absolutely timeless quality that can now be better appreciated.

Beyond being the essential presentation of *FRANKENSTEIN* (okay, one might kvetch about the choice of freeze-framing the ending credit so that it’s onscreen throughout the exit music), the DVD also offers a documentary by David J. Skal, an audio commentary, a so-bad-it’s-almost-good short film called *BOO!* (interesting mostly because of footage from the lost 1930 *THE CAT CREEPS*), stills, posters, and a reissue trailer. (Though it exists, Universal apparently never reached an agreement with the physical owner of the 1931 trailer.) It is a veritable cornucopia of *FRANKENSTEIN* material. The documentary is very well done, though one might question the aptness of some of those commenting on the film. But when Skal or Paul M. Jensen or Gregory William Mank or Bill Condon hold the floor, there is little cause for complaint. (Condon is especially insightful.) Of course, much of what is said is going to be pretty familiar to Universal horror fans, but one must remember that there is—believe it or not—an entire world out there made up of people who are not walking encyclopedias of horror lore! As both a primer for those poor souls and a souvenir for the rest of us, it is a not unimpressive accomplishment.

*Continued on page 74*

# Crimson Chronicles

by Forrest J Ackerman



Nude no more! Fans at the Monster Bash, Monster Rally, Godzilla G-Fest, and 30th Anniversary Comic-con (where I was recognized as its first Guest of Honor), they all observed that I "looked naked" with a bare third finger on my left hand usually adorned by Bela Lugosi's Dracula ring (also seen onscreen on the fingers of Lon Chaney Jr. and John Carradine). I was convinced that the silver bat atop the carnelian stone had flown with the ring right off my finger when I was waving my hand for two hours at thousands of sidewalk viewers as I was driven on an openair classic of 1956 (That's the year I turned 40 and never felt so old in my life, today, approaching 83, I feel younger than springtime and on my way to celebrating my Geo. Burnsian 100th birthday. I'll have composed a lot of CRIMSON CHRONICLES by then!) The occasion: the annual Youth Parade in nearby Lawndale home of the pioneering "scientifiction" author and client Alfred Johannes Olsen Jr. ("Call me Bob.")

Well, it was by now a couple months in the past and the car, fairgrounds, and travel route had been scoured. Even a metal detector had been called into play by concerned fan Steve Drasil, who played detective above and beyond the call of duty, and there was no sign of the ring. I resigned myself to its loss, figured there was one in 26 chances of someone with the initial "D" (David, Drew, Dorothy, Darlyne, Deborah, Donald, Darcy Dick) finding it and considering themselves lucky. I honestly felt it had been photographed and kissed for the last time.

But pal Joe Moe (really!), would not hear of it. He firmly believed it was somewhere in the house and was determined to find it. So on Friday the 27th of August, a day that will live in fame (not in infamy, à la Pearl Harbor), Joe Moe and Lee Harris began ransacking my bedroom. They tore the bed to pieces, searched every inch beneath it, then Joe was rooting around a drawer crowded

with filmonster paraphernalia when the next thing I knew he came dashing down the stairs from the third level to where I was sitting in the dying—er, living room. He let out a whoop and a ho! er like he had just found a thousand-dollar bill or Frankenstein's neck bolts or a pterodactyl's ptooth from KING KONG. He ran to me, opened his fist, and there was the Korhinoor diamond? No, some-



thing more precious: Bela Lugosi's Dracula ring!!

Joe Moe was entitled to the thousand-dollar reward I offered. But, no, he didn't want it. I hereby declare August 27 Annual Joe Moe Discovery Day! (Does it have a certain "ring" to it?)

*A Book of Vampyres . . . and More* That is the present I have received from poet Bret Rutherford, a large 206-page book from Grim Reaper Press overflowing with 69 heartgrpping poems about the Undead,

Incubi, Demons, Werewolves, and Various Monsters, including "Son of Dracula" (the author himself) "A Letter to Mummy," "Scenes from a Mexican Vampire Movie," "The Spiders," and "An Exeter Vampire." The verses are inspired and the poet states in his inscription to me that I started him down the path to Transylvania when he was 12 years old and picked up a copy of that famous filmonsterzine that I edited 190 issues of between 1958 and 1982.

THE TERROR of 1929 was the first genuinely all talking film (not a printed word on the screen) long before Bradbury's FAHRENHEIT 451 and now—hurray! huzzah!—the good news is that the sound for reels one, two, and five have been discovered! When in the new Millennium will LONDON AFTER MIDNIGHT at last surface from the limbo Lon's lost vampire film has been in since 1927?

Drac is back and a string quartet has strung him up! Yes, the 1931 Lugosi classic DRACULA, which originally had no sound score, now has had an eerie one by Philip Glass added to it to increase the mood of the macabre.

Auctions Speak Louder than Words In 1931 I had the foresight to ask Bela Lugosi to sign a card "Count Dracula." As far as is known, this is the only time in his career he actually signed the name that made him worldfamous and immortal. It is signed in unfaded ink and now I have decided, in my 83rd year, to share it with Bela's #1 fan, whoever he or she may claim to be. A single copy (Xerox copy) is on auction until November 24. The winner is to agree that no reproduction rights are included in the sale and that the copy is for the collector's pride only, to be shared with any appreciative aficionado. Top three bidders will be informed once and given the opportunity to raise their bids. Contact FJA, 2495 Gendower Ave., Hollywood, CA 90027-1110 or fax 323-664-5612.



## COMING UP SOON IN SCARLET STREET!

The Mystery of the Wax Museum Vs House of Wax, Victoria Price Remembers Her Father Vincent, Hurd Hatfield, The Pictures of Dorian Gray, Hammer's Shane Briant, The Man Who Created Topper, and more!





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# American Gothic

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## The Return of

# DRACULA

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by John Brunas and Richard Valley

SCARLET STREET

**T**ransylvania! A predawn chill hangs over a bleak country cemetery in the Balkans as a search party arrives on the scene. Armed with crucifixes, the small group heads purposefully toward a lonely crypt. Standing in the center of the tomb is a stark concrete box. As the village priest utters a prayer, the group's leader, John Meyerman (John Wengraf) of the European Police Authority, orders the top of the box removed, exposing a casket. Hammer and stake in hand, he nervously awaits the first rays of dawn. At the precise moment of sunrise, the coffin is opened to reveal emptiness! Meyerman is stunned. The arch-vampire, Dracula, has eluded him again.

Wherever he is, he must be found!

The first American-made Dracula film since the undead Transylvanian visited Florida (the sunshine state!) in Universal's wrap-up to its horror series, *ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN* (1948). Gramercy Films' *THE RETURN OF DRACULA* (1958) began on this decidedly ominous note. The picture followed hard on the heels of the British *HORROR OF DRACULA* (1958), a fright flick that, along with *THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1957), quickly made Hammer Films a household name—provided the house had a hungry horror fan in residence.

Comparatively, *THE RETURN OF DRACULA* came nowhere near the Hammer film in terms of sheer shock value. Absent were the high-pitched scares, color-drenched camerawork, and shrieking score, shrewdly calculated and expertly executed to milk every last ounce of horror portrayed on the screen. That isn't to say, though, that *RETURN* withheld the goods or disappointed. Baby boomers who first caught it at a Saturday matinee, teamed with such inferior fare as *THE FLAME BARRIER* (1958), remember its grim, low-key style, its morbid overtones, its aura of apprehension and impending doom, to this day. The mist-filled coffin, the murdered pet cat (a truly traumatic occurrence for a child), the blind girl who, vampirized, can see what better fare to watch while gorging on candy and popcorn?

Deftly directed by film-editor-turned director Paul Landres (who demonstrated his cutting room prowess on a number of fright films produced by Universal at the tail end of the forties horror cycle), *THE RETURN OF DRACULA* was the third of a quartet of thrillers made by the production team of Jules V. Levy, Arthur Gardner, and Arnold Laven under the Gramercy Pictures banner and released by United Artists. *RETURN*'s predecessors, *THE MONSTER THAT CHALLENGED THE WORLD* and *THE VAMPIRE*, released in 1957 on an all-horror twin bill, were two superior examples of the kind of work that could be achieved with limited finances, a wealth of enthusiasm—and talent. (*THE FLAME BARRIER*, produced after *DRACULA*, was a decided letdown in terms of quality, though it still had one or two minor moments to recommend it.)

Vividly photographed by Val Lewton alumnus Jack Mackenzie and fueled by the ominous, driving rhythms of Gerald Fried's evocative score, *THE RETURN OF DRACULA* boasts the same solid craftsmanship as Gramercy's earlier productions. Veteran performer Francis Lederer's

casting in the title role is nothing short of inspired. Following Max Schreck (in 1922's *NOSFERATU*), Bela Lugosi (in 1931's *DRACULA*), Carlos Vilarrias (in 1931's Spanish version of *DRACULA*), John Carradine (in 1944's *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN* and 1945's *HOUSE OF DRACULA*), and Christopher Lee (in *HORROR OF DRACULA*), he was the sixth actor in horror film history to don the count's cape (though, in this instance, a broad-shouldered overcoat doubles for the traditional garb, which would have rendered him a fashion victim in this modern setting). The dark, brooding star of many a Hollywood B restores the Continental suavity that Lugosi first brought to the part, but without Bela's patented heavy-handedness. Like Lee's interpretation of the vampire count, Lederer's is one of imposing physical strength and the threat of brute force, though paradoxically he accomplishes most of his fiendish

feats through the hypnotic powers previously displayed onscreen by Lugosi and Carradine.

The film's opening scene establishes John Meyerman as *THE RETURN OF DRACULA*'s Van Helsing substitute. He is a dedicated vampire hunter, but more than that, he's cut from the same cloth as the Nazi hunter so vividly portrayed by Edward G. Robinson in Orson Welles' film noir classic *THE STRANGER* (1946)—and, like Robinson's character, Mr. Wilson, he will track his quarry from Europe to a small rural American town and the bosom of a loving, All-American family. In this, *RETURN* also echoes Alfred Hitchcock's *notrish* *SHADOW OF A DOUBT* (1943). All three films follow the same plot trajectory: a monstrous villain (*SHADOW*'s Merry Widow Murderer, Charlie Oakley, played by Joseph Cotten, *STRANGER*'s Nazi war criminal, Franz Kindler, played by Orson Welles; and *RETURN*'s vampire king, Count Dracula, played by Lederer), seeking a safe haven, insinuates himself into a fine American family (in Oakley's case, his own, in Kindler's via marriage, and in Dracula's, via impersonation of an old-world relative) and is ultimately exposed by the forces



It's a heartwarming (well, better make that blood-curdling) family reunion when Cousin Bellac (Francis Lederer) is welcomed into the bosom of his family (Greta Granstedt as Cora Mayberry, Jimmy Baird as son Mickey, Ray Stricklyn as family friend Tim Hanson, and Norma Eberhardt as daughter Rachel).

of good dogging his trail (*SHADOW*'s Jack Graham, played by Macdonald Carey, *STRANGER*'s Mr. Wilson, and *RETURN*'s John Meyerman). Pat Fielder's *RETURN* script also borrows from *SHADOW OF A DOUBT* in the character of the family's daughter, Rachel. In the Hitchcock film, Teresa Wright plays the sensitive daughter, Charlie, who is devastated on learning that the man she worships, her Uncle Charlie, is a homicidal maniac. Young Charlie has always regarded her uncle as a soulmate, an extension of herself; needless to say, the devastating news compels her to look deep within herself for understanding. Fielder's Young Charlie counterpart, Rachel, also fancies herself a kindred spirit of her distant relative. (He is an artist and she dreams of a career in fashion design.) The revelation that her cousin is an inhuman imposter is a shock, to be sure, but doesn't carry the same personal ramifications.

Nevertheless, if the Hitchcock and Welles films are hard acts to follow—and few Hitchcock and Welles films aren't—*THE RETURN OF DRACULA* accomplishes much without anything near the budget of its companions, and never embarrasses itself in such high-tone company.



Before **THE RETURN OF DRACULA** and **HORROR OF DRACULA** (both 1958), there were few instances of a horror film following the vampiric career of one of the count's victims, even though this was a major subplot of Bram Stoker's original 1897 novel. In **THE RETURN OF DRACULA**, the blind Jenny (Virginia Vincent) is visited by the King of the Undead, who, strangely, she can see. When Jenny dies, she returns as a full-fledged, fully-armed creature of the night (which explains her empty coffin). Alas, the poor girl's new "life" comes to an abrupt and colorful end (colorful, since a closeup of blood spurting from her body is the only color shot in this otherwise monochromatic film).

After establishing the proper mood with the suspenseful, atmospheric opening, **RETURN** is a shockingly mid-way station. (**RETURN**'s greatest stylistic flaw is that the Transylvanian scenes don't look markedly different from those set in California, and a sense of contrast is lost.) Artist Bellac Gordan (Norbert Schiller) aids his family a fearful arrow. Seeking the freedom of expression denied him in his homeland, he is emigrating to America. Entering a train compartment, Gordan hardly notices a shrouded figure, his face buried in a newspaper, sitting in a corner. Responding to a voiceless command, Bellac turns just as the menacing figure envelops him.

A quick train, boat, and second train trip later, and we find ourselves in Carleton, California—specifically, in one of the best-known locations for literally dozens of horror and sci-fi films of the fifties: Bronson Canyon. Young Mickey Mayberry (Jimmy Band, best known as Per Wee Jenkins on the 1955 TV series **FURY**) is searching for his lost cat, Nugget, and finds the little puss in a cave, playfully exploring the bottom of a deep and dangerous pit. Suddenly, a train whistle is heard—Cousin Bellac is due!—and Mickey rushes home with his pet. I kept thinking of **SHADOW OF A DOUBT**, which spews black smoke instead of white when it arrives with Charlie Oakley: there is something slightly askew about this train—it's the six-thirty, but it's arriving 20 minutes early, something it's never done before.)

Back home, boy-next-door Tim Hanson (Ray Stricklyn) is impatiently to drive the Mayberry clan to the station. Indoors, Mickey's sister Rachel (Norma Eberhardt) is a bit flustered at the prospect of meeting her cousin, while mother Clara (Greta Granstedt) is all frayed nerves. ("I hope he likes these saucers of asparagus.") Tim and the Mayberrys arrive at the station only to be told by station master Eddie that no one got off the already departed train. (The part is played by William Fawcett, a character actor whose presence spells "America" in a colorless appearance in Western programmers and on such TV fare as **FURY**, **WAGON TRAIN**, **PETITCOAT JUNCTION**, **GUNSMOKE**, and **THE TWIN TOWERS**. He even turns up in that other small town fable 1962's **THE MUSIC MAN**.) Meanwhile, off to the side of the station, in a simple but lawless yet executed lap dissolve, Count Dracula materializes in his new identity of Cousin Bellac. The bloodsucker watches the tiny group chattering for a moment, then his hard, brutal expression softens as he puts on the mask of humanity and introduces himself to "his family."

It isn't long before the Mayberrys are confounded by their relative's strange living habits. "Bellac" skips dinner, removes the mirror from his bedroom, is away a day "painting," and makes only fleeting appearances after dark. Introduced to the Reverend Whitfield (Gage Clarke), for whom Rachel performs charity work at the parish house, Bellac is cynical to the point of contempt.

Whitfield (referring to Rachel): This one is a real treasure. You should see how the patients respond to her.

Dracula: I'm sure even the devil would respond

Reverend Whitfield responds with great good humor, but he can hardly be expected to know that "Bellac" is probably making reference to a personal acquaintance!

The following morning, Mickey again visits the pit, only to discover the bloodied remains of his beloved Nugget. Soon we discover the reason—Dracula has moved his coffin inside the inner reaches of the cave, beyond the "no trespassing" sign, and rises at sunset to return to the Mayberry home. (This scene is atmospherically mounted by director Landers and photographer Mackenzie Starling; the camera moves right inside the coffin before it opens, treating us to a glimpse of the vampire in slumber, surrounded by an incongruous but suitably supernatural must. Cut to outside as the coffin lid creaks open in slow motion. Dracula's hand emerges and "feels" the atmosphere, confirming that it is safe to venture forth, then the lid opens entirely and the Lord of the Undead sits up in "bed." As he starts to stand, the camera cuts to a view just above, so that he rises into the frame, a commanding and powerful presence.)

Rachel visits Jenny Blake (Virginia Vincent), her favorite patient at the parish house, and reads to her. Jenny is blind, but also seems to suffer from another, unnamed affliction—one which keeps her confined to her room. Scripter Pat Medder knows her vampire lore, and harrows his subplot liberally from Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897). The

friendship between the two girls—much like the friendship between Stoker's Mina Murray and Lucy Westenra—has become something of a cliché, but is effectively employed. And Lucy's weakness and premonition of doom is also found in Jenny.

Rachel: I have the funniest feeling. I feel as if I'm going to die. Some nights are darker. Some are almost black, Rachel—like tonight. It seems so dark, and I'm scared! I'm scared of being alone!

On cue, the children of the night—presumably dogs, or is it coyotes or wolves?—begin to howl. Jenny cries out, that someone is at the window. Out Rachel calms her and when the blind girl finally drifts to sleep, takes a cross from her hands. Venturing into the living room, Rachel exchanges a few hurried words with Reverend Whitfield before going home. (Like William Fawcett? Gage Clarke was a familiar face from film and TV, notably 1956's **THE BAD SEED**, **PERRY MASON**, and **GUNSMOKE**. His mild demeanor lent itself to playing members of the clergy, and he did so again in the **TWILIGHT ZONE** episode "One More Pallbearer" and 1961's **THE ABSENT MINDED PROFESSOR**.)

Later, after an aborted attempt to vampirize Rachel, which is interrupted by Tim, who drives up in one of **RETURN**'s many two-tone fifties cars), Dracula pays a nocturnal visit to Jenny, entering through her window in a cloud of mist. The sightless girl senses the undead predator before he utters a word—or at least a word that the audience can also hear—and questions her guest. ("What? What did you say?") A benevolent smile appears on Dracula's face, and he replies, ever so softly:

"I said, look at me, Jenny. Open your eyes and look at me. You can see me if you try. You can see me with your mind. I can free your soul, Jenny. I can take you from the blackness into the light. Look at me, Jenny. Can you see me now?"







Before **THE RETURN OF DRACULA** and **HORROR OF DRACULA** (both 1958), there were few instances of a horror film following the vampiric career of one of the count's victims, even though this was a major subplot of Bram Stoker's original 1897 novel. In **THE RETURN OF DRACULA**, the blind Jenny (Virginia Vincent) is visited by the King of the Undead, who, strangely, she can see. When Jenny dies, she returns as a full-fledged, fully-sighted creature of the night (which explains her empty coffin). Alas, the poor girl's new "life" comes to an abrupt and colorful end (colorful, since a closeup of blood spurting from her body is the only color shot in this otherwise monochromatic film).

After establishing the proper mood with the suspenseful cemetery sequence, the film takes us to a bustling railway station. (**RETURN**'s greatest stylistic flaw is that the Transylvanian scenes don't look markedly different from those set in California, and a sense of contrast is lost.) Artist Bellac Gordal (Norbert Schiller) bids his family a tearful farewell. Seeking the freedom of expression denied him in his homeland, he is emigrating to America. Entering a train compartment, Gordal hardly notices a shrouded figure, his face buried in a newspaper, sitting in a corner. Responding to a voiceless command, Bellac turns just as the menacing figure envelopes him.

A quick train, boat, and second train trip later, and we find ourselves in Carleton, California—specifically, in one of the best-known locations for literally dozens of horror and sci-fi films of the fifties: Bronson Canyon. Young Mickey Mayberry (Jimmy Baird, best known as Pee Wee Jenkins on the 1955 TV series **FURY**) is searching for his lost cat, Nugget, and finds the little puss in a cave, playfully exploring the bottom of a deep and dangerous pit. Suddenly a train whistle is heard. Cousin Bellac is due! and Mickey rushes home without his pet. (Like the locomotive in **SHADOW OF A DOUBT**, which spews black smoke instead of white when it arrives with Charlie Oakley, there is something slightly askew about this train—it's the six-thirty, but it's arriving 20 minutes early, something it's never done before.)

Back home, boy-next-door Tim Hanson (Ray Stricklyn) wants impatiently to drive the Mayberry clan to the station. Indoors, Mickey's sister Rachel (Norma Eberhardt) is all aflutter at the prospect of meeting her cousin, while mother Cora (Greta Granstedt) is all frayed nerves. ("I hope he likes cheese sauce on asparagus!") Tim and the Mayberrys arrive at the station, only to be told by station master Eddie that no one got off the already departed train. (The part is played by William Fawcett, a character actor whose very presence spells "Americana" via countless appearances in Western programmers and on such TV fare as **FURY**, **WAGON TRAIN**, **PETTICOAT JUNCTION**, **GUNSMOKE**, and **RIN TIN TIN**. He even turns up in that other small-town fable, 1962's **THE MUSIC MAN**!) Meanwhile, off to the side of the station, in a simple but flawlessly executed lap dissolve, Count Dracula materializes in his new identity of Cousin Bellac. The bloodsucker watches the tiny group chattering for a moment, then his hard, brutal expression softens as he puts on the mask of humanity and introduces himself to "his family."

It isn't long before the Mayberrys are confounded by their relative's strange living habits: "Bellac" skips dinner, removes the mirror from his bedroom, is away all day "painting," and makes only fleeting appearances after dark. Introduced to the Reverend Whitfield (Gage Clarke), for whom Rachel performs charity work at the parish house "Bellac" is cynical to the point of contempt.

*Whitfield* (referring to Rachel): This one is a real treasure. You should see how the patients respond to her.

*Dracula*: I'm sure even the devil would respond

Reverend Whitfield responds with great good humor, but he can hardly be expected to know that "Bellac" is probably making reference to a personal acquaintance!

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**LEFT:** One of the hallmarks of a Pat Fielder script is that the characters experience genuine grief over the loss of a loved one, even if it's a pet and not a person. Here, Mickey is bereft after finding his beloved kitten, Nugget, dead in a nearby cave. Mother Cora tries in vain to help him as sister Rachel (who otherwise has a typically antagonistic relationship with her kid brother) watches helplessly. **RIGHT:** It's Halloween and Rachel thinks Mickey's devilish costume is only too appropriate.

To her horrified wonder, Jenny can see the vampire, and he is the only thing she ever does see—during her natural lifetime. Virginia Vincent's moving performance as Jenny, Lederer's commanding presence (he nearly drips compassion while managing to hush certain words as if he were the serpent of Eden), and Fielder's rich dialogue, which easily surpasses most B-movie blather of the period, all combine to make this one of horror's genuinely classic moments.

Comes the dawn, Rachel is summoned to the parish house by the Reverend; Jenny's health has taken a sudden turn for the worse. Babbling incoherently about having seen someone, the frantic girl warns Rachel of impending doom, and places the cross in her friend's hand, insisting that she wear it for protection ("You know him!") Before she can divulge anything further, she drops dead.

On the day of Jenny's interment (in a cemetery that looks suspiciously like the one in Transylvania), the Mayberrys are approached by Mack Bryant (Charles Tannen), an investigator secretly working with Meyerman, the vampire stalker who has tracked the monster to America. (We first see the character on the street watching the Mayberry home, much as Jack Graham is introduced in *SHADOW OF A DOUBT*.) Bryant discloses that an unidentified man was thrown from a train in Europe, and that he is questioning those who had traveled in the group with him. "Bellac" appears and gladly surrenders his stolen papers for Bryant's inspection. Unbeknownst to all, Bryant snaps a picture of the vampire, using a miniature camera concealed in a cigarette lighter.

Soon after the sun sets, Dracula steals into Jenny's crypt and, using his dark powers, awakens her corpse in its coffin. (Like her master's posthumous berth, Jenny's has central fog-conditioning.) In another example of Fielder's finely crafted dialogue, Dracula urges the girl to embrace her new "life" as one of the undead:

"Rise up, Jenny. Rise up and breathe. That's right; it hurts to breathe again—but only for a moment."

Later, after meeting Meyerman and letting him know about the photograph of "Bellac," Bryant awaits the arrival of the evening train. Jenny, now ironically and rather cruelly endowed with sight, appears all in white from out of the nearby woods. (She is seen at a considerable distance,

evoking a similar, but superior, shot of the ghostly Miss Jessel in 1961's *THE INNOCENTS*.) Jenny calls the investigator by name, begging for help, then vanishes behind a tree. Searching in vain for the mysterious girl, Bryant is attacked by a white wolf and horribly mangled. (*RETURN* scores again with this scene, the attack, with understandable restraint using a dog in place of a wolf, appears genuinely vicious. No playful pooch here, like those that have marred the many film versions of Arthur Conan Doyle's classic 1902 novel *The Hound of the Baskervilles*—this hellish beast is out for blood!)

Carrying on the investigation himself, Meyerman first visits the town doctor—who, though played by Robert Lynn instead of John Beal, is none other than Dr. Paul Beecher of *THE VAMPIRE* (1957), with the same sign in front of the same house, and with no indication that he expired only a twelvemonth earlier—and voices his belief that Jenny Blake didn't die a natural death. Next, he drops in on Reverend Whitfield and presents him with startling proof that the Mayberrys' European relative is indeed an impostor: the snapshot taken by the murdered Bryant, showing Cora Mayberry and an empty space where "Cousin Bellac" should be standing. Meyerman states his mission with chilling clarity: he must seek out the resting place of the undead bloodsucker and his victims and drive stakes through their hearts. Reluctantly, Whitfield agrees to help. (Alas, Gage Clarke didn't carry this practice to any of his later films, where it might have proved useful—particularly in 1960's *POLLYANNA*.)

Meanwhile, back at the Mayberry home, Rachel and Tim are on the living-room floor, indulging in some extended foreplay. (Throughout the film, Eberhardt and Stricklyn play their scenes together with considerable ease and believability, perhaps because their offscreen friendship also contained some extended—some very extended—foreplay.) Interrupting a kiss, "Bellac" arrives home after another day of "painting" and Rachel follows him upstairs to invite him to the following night's Halloween party. "Bellac" declines. Rachel, hurt by her relative's insularity, insists that he hasn't given the family a chance to make him feel truly welcome. "Bellac," echoing Charlie Oakley's ha-

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# Midnight Man

# Francis Lederer

interviewed by Danny Savello



If Francis Lederer is one of the screen's forgotten Draculas, he isn't worried about it. Playing the role in 1958, the same year that Christopher Lee first starred as the bloody Transylvanian in *HORROR OF DRACULA*, Lederer is not proud of his few excursions into Horrordom. He would much rather be remembered for his work in Germany with G.W. Pabst (1929's *PANDORA'S BOX*) or in Hollywood with Mitchell Leisen (1939's *MIDNIGHT*).

Born Frantisek Lederer in 1906 in Prague, the actor began his stage career as a teenager and quickly became a matinee idol in Berlin. After appearing in films in Germany and France, he made his way to the United States and Broadway in 1932, starring in *AUTUMN CROCUS*. Hollywood beck-

oned in 1934, and Lederer answered with roles in *MAN OF TWO WORLDS* (1934), *MY AMERICAN WIFE* (1936), *THE LONE WOLF IN PARIS* (1938), *CONFESSIONS OF A NAZI SPY* (1939), *THE MAN I MARRIED* (1940), *THE DIARY OF A CHAMBERMAID* (1946), and *A WOMAN OF DISTINCTION* (1950), *CAPTAIN CAREY USA* (1950), *SURRENDER* (1950), among many others.

Though many of these films are forgotten today, Francis Lederer's performances in *THE RETURN OF DRACULA* and *TEROR IS A MAN* (1959) have endeared him to horror fans, a tribute he'd just as soon live without.

**Francis Lederer:** I started my theatrical activities in Prague. I was in the theater, first, before going into films. G. W. Pabst was a director, and then he directed the film *PANDORA'S BOX* in Prague and in Berlin.

**Scarlet Street:** Wasn't *PANDORA'S BOX* considered rather daring at that time?

**FL:** Well, yes, especially in as much as we used an American actress and it was something extraordinary to do in Berlin. That was really the extraordinary thing about that picture!

**SS:** Louise Brooks has quite a large cult of admirers today. What was so special about her as an actress?

**FL:** The special thing about her in Berlin was that she didn't speak any German! (Laughs) And Pabst didn't speak English! She had a translator from the United States with her, and she was a very mysterious young lady. Every thing was mysterious about Louise Brooks, you know—an enigma!

**SS:** You weren't able to converse at all?

**FL:** Well, no. Absolutely everything had to be done through the transla-

tor. But Pabst was a marvelous director, already I had met him and worked with him in Berlin on the stage, in the play on which *PANDORA'S BOX* was based.

**SS:** Was *PANDORA'S BOX* made at UFA?

**FL:** Yes, and I also made *THREE PENNY OPERA* and *KOMERADSHAFT* there. *THREE PENNY OPERA* was with Lotte Lenya, also a mysterious lady and a marvelous actress.

**SS:** How did working at UFA prepare you for Hollywood?

**FL:** Well, it was just about the same, really—very, very straight to the point. You had to be at the studio at nine in the morning and worked there all day, and it was very much hard work! Don't ever let anyone tell you it is easy to be an actor. Of course, in Hollywood everything ran just a little more smoothly.

**SS:** Was Pabst your favorite director?

**FL:** Well, I don't know. All the directors I've worked with—I loved them, I adored them, and I worked wonderfully with every one of them!

**SS:** What brought you to Hollywood?

**FL:** I was brought to Hollywood when I was on Broadway. I was playing on the stage and I got an offer from RKO—and I took it! I stayed with RKO for three or four years, I believe.

**SS:** Among the films you made in the thirties was one entry in *The Lone Wolf* mystery series, *THE LONE WOLF IN PARIS*.

**FL:** Well, they only wanted me for one! (Laughs)

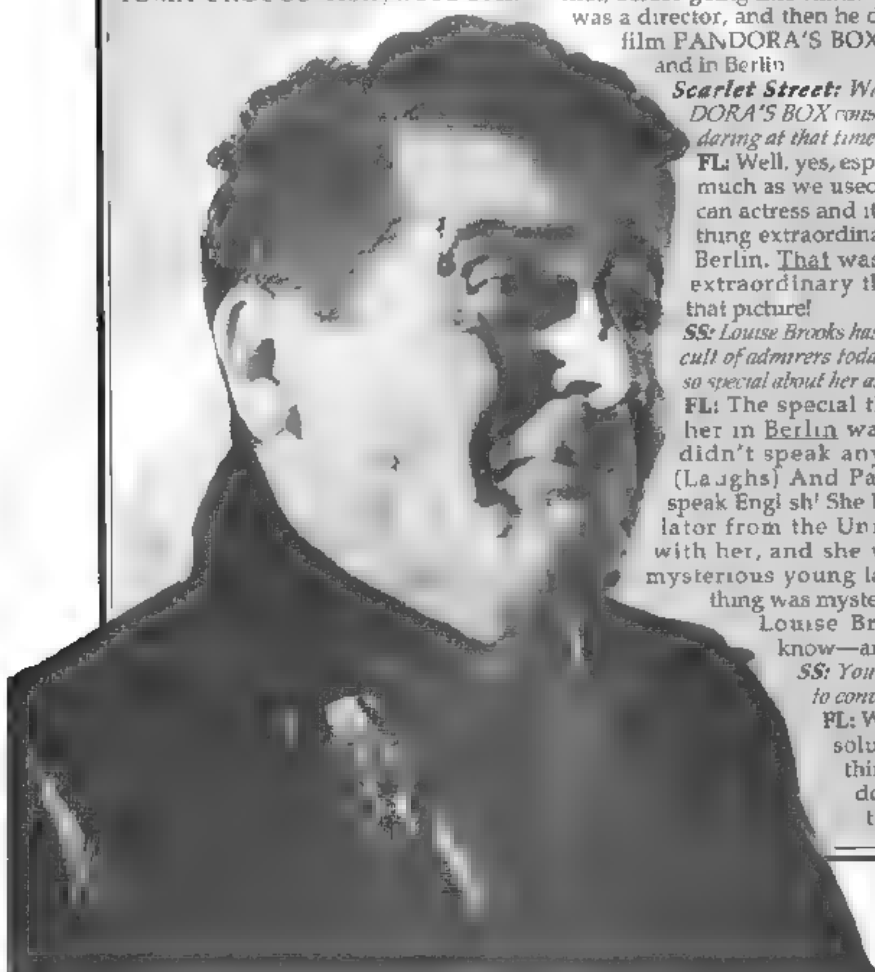
**SS:** Well, that explains that! You also appeared in one of Hollywood's classic screwball comedies, *MIDNIGHT*.

**FL:** Oh, I adored working in that! It was a very funny script by Billy Wilder, before he started directing his own stories. Claudette Colbert was the star, and Don Ameche was in it, and Mary Astor and John Barrymore....

**SS:** What was he like?

**FL:** Barrymore? He was a strong man of experience and, in his own way, mysterious. He came on the set and spoke very little with everybody, but whenever he did something everybody immediately looked at him. Barrymore.

*Continued on page 40*





**PAGE 39 TOP:** Francis Lederer poses for a *MIDNIGHT* (1939) publicity shot, with (among others) stars John Barrymore, Don Ameche, Mary Astor, and Claudette Colbert. Mitchell Leisen directed this classic screwball comedy from a script by Charles Brackett and Billy Wilder. **PAGE 39 BOTTOM:** Lederer is about to meet a well-deserved death in *TERROR IS A MAN* (1959). **LEFT:** When an earlier victim is staked, Dracula (Lederer) finds himself with a severe case of heartburn, interrupting his attack on Rachel (Norma Eberhardt). **RIGHT:** Dr. Charles Girard (Lederer) finds uninvited houseguest William Fitzgerald (Richard Derr) has become a little too snoopy in *TER- ROR IS A MAN*.

#### FRANCIS LEDERER

*Continued from page 39*

was magnetic, he was a fantastic, fan-  
tastic personality!

**SS:** Mitchell Leisen directed *MIDNIGHT*

**FL:** Oh, Mitch Leisen! He was a heav-  
enly director! And so easy to work with,  
I should say! What made him special,  
first of all, was his taste. Not only did  
he direct, he designed clothes, he de-  
signed sets. He was absolutely brilliant  
and directed brilliantly!

**SS:** You worked with Leisen at the height  
of his career, in *MIDNIGHT*, and later, af-  
ter he entered a downward spiral, in *CAP-  
TAIN CAREY*. Did the difference show?

**FL:** Oh, no! His personal life didn't en-  
ter into his professional life, which was  
highly professional and efficient. He re-  
mained a marvelous director, with the  
most exquisite taste in everything!

**SS:** *CONFESSIONS OF A NAZI SPY* was  
one of Hollywood's first efforts about the  
Nazi threat. Did you feel trapped at all in  
this kind of film during the war years?

**FL:** No, I was treated as an actor and I  
functioned as an actor. I was not politi-  
cally in any way active. You are no  
more a Nazi if you play a Nazi than a  
vampire if you play Dracula.

**SS:** Weren't both you and Martin Kosleck  
up for the same role in *CONFESSIONS OF  
A NAZI SPY*?

**FL:** No, no, no... Kosleck was just an-  
other actor in the company. He had his  
individual role and I had my role. They  
didn't in any way conflict in our work  
together or not together!

**SS:** You appeared in *THE MADONNA'S  
SECRET*, which was directed by Edgar G.  
Ulmer.

**FL:** Good guy! Good artist! He was an ex-  
traordinary individual and wonderful to  
work with, always stimulating. That was  
made for PRC, which was a very low-  
budget studio. Nevertheless, the films  
were made in the usual length of time and  
everything was business and punctuality  
and workmanship, just as if you were a  
carpenter.

**SS:** Were you allowed retakes on *THE MA-  
DONNA'S SECRET*?

**FL:** Oh, no, no, no—not at PRC! (Laughs)

**SS:** In the fifties, you appeared in two horror  
movies: *THE RETURN OF DRACULA* and  
*TERROR IS A MAN*. Many actors look down  
on the horror genre and dislike admitting they  
made horror films. How did you feel about it?

**FL:** I didn't feel good about it at all! I was  
more or less fooled into it. When I was  
engaged for these two films, they had not  
made a script ready. They said everything  
would be fine and so forth—and then  
they turned out to be horror films, which  
if I had known in the beginning I  
wouldn't have made!

**SS:** Both these films are highly regarded among  
horror movie fans.

**FL:** Highly regarded as what? I believe  
they were regarded as what they wanted  
to be! They wanted to be horror films!  
That is fine for them, but I did not want  
to be in horror films!

**SS:** Does it matter to you that the fans like  
them so much?

**FL:** No, I was more or less fooled into it,  
but I did my best to do my best and that is  
all! There were small, independent com-  
panies and they said I would get a good  
part, so I did it without having the script  
before we started to shoot. In a way, of  
course, they were good parts...

**SS:** You imbued the roles of Dracula and  
Dr. Charles Girard with a considerable  
amount of charm, which adds dimension to  
the characters.

**FL:** Well, they were apparently charm-  
ing parts!

**SS:** But you really didn't know they were  
horror films.

**FL:** No.

**SS:** Even with the title *THE RETURN OF  
DRACULA*...

**FL:** No!

**SS:** Did you ever take a role again before  
you saw the script?

**FL:** Yes, I'm afraid I did; that was one  
of my mistakes!

**SS:** You can't have made many mistakes!

**FL:** Not many, but enough to grieve  
me! (Laughs)

**SS:** *TERROR IS A MAN* is actually based  
loosely on the H.G. Wells novel *The Island  
of Dr. Moreau*.

**FL:** Well, you wouldn't know it to see  
it. That was made in the Philippines.  
Again, at that time I took anything that  
was offered to me and did my best to  
do the job as good as I possibly could.  
Whether I was good or the movie was  
good, that is a matter of opinion and of  
taste.

**SS:** How were working conditions?

**FL:** Oh, very primitive! But they were  
very nice people, very, very nice  
people! As for the conditions, well, I  
didn't expect naturally to have the kind  
of thing we had at MGM, but I did the  
best I could under the circumstances.  
That was always my purpose when I  
acted—to do my best!

**SS:** Even in horror movies?

**FL:** Yes, even in horror movies...

## THE RETURN OF DRACULA

*Continued from page 38*

of humanity in *SHADOW OF A DOUBT*, responds harshly:

"If my behavior seems different, perhaps it is because it serves a higher purpose than to find acceptance in this dull and useless world."

It's not nearly as forceful, but the sentiment is precisely the same as Oakley's: "How do you know what the world is like? Do you know the world is a foul sty? Do you know if you ripped the fronts off houses you'd find swine? The world is a hell—what does it matter what happens in it?"

Dracula, turning his lustful attentions toward Rachel, pays the young girl a visit as she sleeps and weaves his spell over her:

*Dracula:* There is only one reality, Rachel, and that is death. I bring you death—a living death. Are you afraid?

*Rachel:* No.

*Dracula:* I bring you the darkness of centuries past and centuries to come. Eternal life and eternal death. Now do you fear?

*Rachel:* No.

The vampire moves in for the attack, his image blurs, and in a mischievous jump cut, Rachel screams as she awakes to find Mickey in a devil's mask the following morning. She finds herself pale (too pale, due to some overdone makeup) and sapped of energy, on the floor next to her bed lies Jenny's crucifix.

Evening arrives and Rachel, with no memory of Dracula's attack on her the previous night, enters Bellac's room to invite him once again to the Halloween party. The room is empty, but the girl sees some of her cousin's artwork leaning against the wall. Giving in to temptation, she examines them, only to find a series of blank canvases and one actual painting: of herself, dressed in her Halloween costume and resting in a coffin! Rushing downstairs to the phone, she has only just begged Tim to come right over when Dracula appears behind her, casting no reflection in the mirror on the wall.

"That's right. There is no reflection. The flesh is only an illusion. The heart beats only when it is drunk with blood."

Tim arrives, and again Dracula's hypnotic influence robs Rachel of any knowledge of his true identity. The young couple leave for the party, Rachel explaining, to Tim's

chagrin, that she simply wanted him to come over to see her costume, which she designed.

After the party is in full swing (with dancing, dunking for apples, and a prize for best costume), Meyerman, Whitfield, and Sheriff Bicknell (John McNamara) stake out the mausoleum where Jenny's body is interred, determine that her coffin is unoccupied, and wait for her inevitable return. Meanwhile, back at the party, Rachel, answering the vampire's call, slips away from Tim and heads for the cave. Transfixed by Dracula's power, Rachel removes Jenny's crucifix from her throat. The count, who heretofore has shown no romantic interest in the girl, promises her eternal life and companionship.

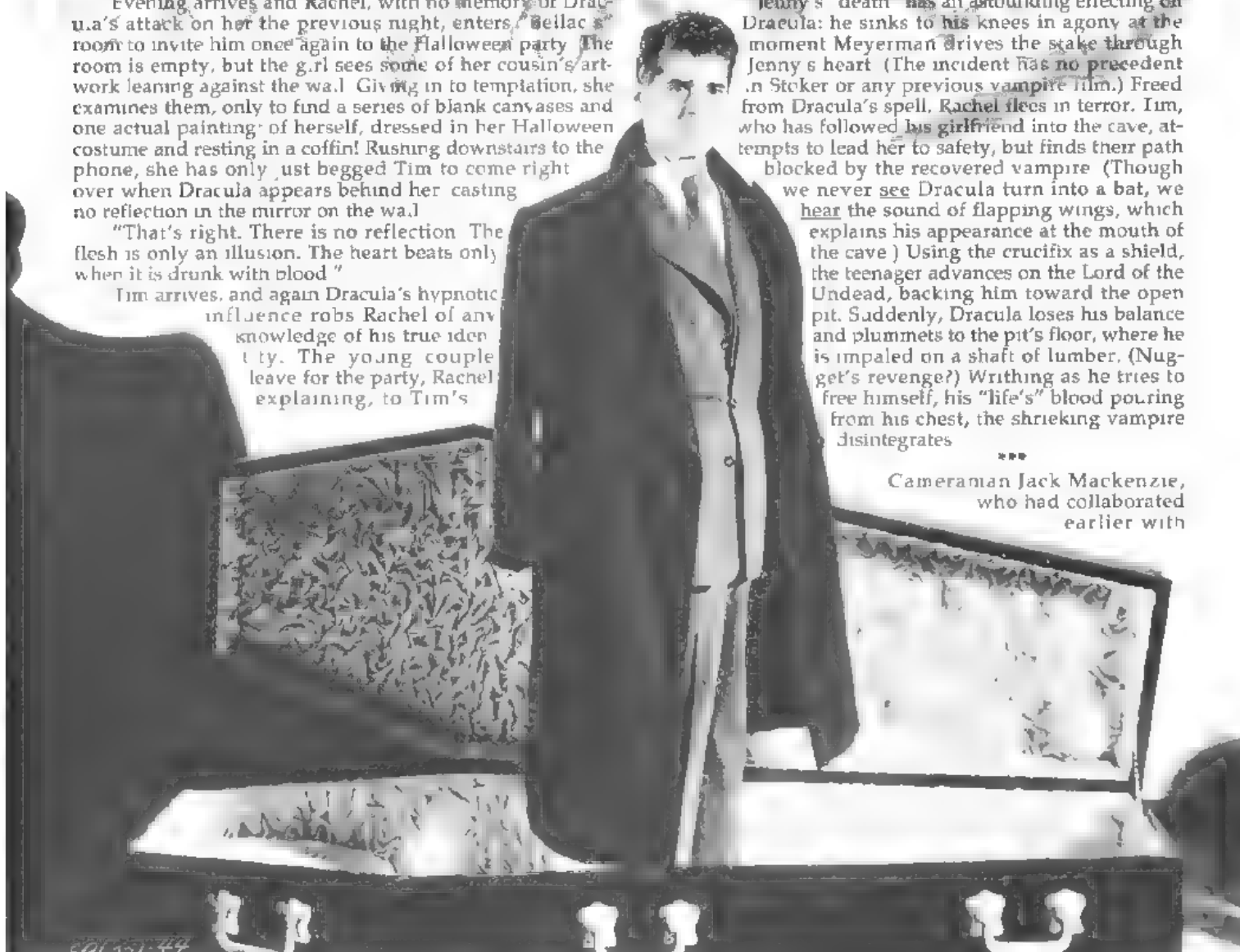
"The world shall spin and they all, all shall die, but not we."

At the cemetery, Jenny has returned to her coffin. The Reverend has insisted that she be offered a prayer before her unnatural existence is brought to an end (she has been paralyzed by a cross), but at last the time has come, and the stake is placed over her heart. As the hammer descends and the stake enters her body, the camera cuts to an extreme closeup—and bright red blood, startling in a black-and-white film, gushes forth. (The sudden and unexpected cut to color stock was inspired by a gunnuck popularized by American International in 1957's *I WAS A TEENAGE FRANKENSTEIN* and 1958's *HOW TO MAKE A MONSTER*, but *THE RETURN OF DRACULA* goes them one better. By confining the shot to the black stake and Jenny's white funeral gown, the audience doesn't realize that the film has momentarily switched over to color until the blood starts to spurt.)

Jenny's "death" has an astounding effecting on Dracula: he sinks to his knees in agony at the moment Meyerman drives the stake through Jenny's heart. (The incident has no precedent in Stoker or any previous vampire film.) Freed from Dracula's spell, Rachel flees in terror. Tim, who has followed his girlfriend into the cave, attempts to lead her to safety, but finds their path blocked by the recovered vampire. (Though we never see Dracula turn into a bat, we hear the sound of flapping wings, which explains his appearance at the mouth of the cave.) Using the crucifix as a shield, the teenager advances on the Lord of the Undead, backing him toward the open pit. Suddenly, Dracula loses his balance and plummets to the pit's floor, where he is impaled on a shaft of lumber. (Nugget's revenge?) Writhing as he tries to free himself, his "life's" blood pouring from his chest, the shrieking vampire disintegrates.

\*\*\*

Cameraman Jack Mackenzie, who had collaborated earlier with







Paul Landres on *THE VAMPIRE* (1957) with superlative results, digs deep into his bag of fright films for *THE RETURN OF DRACULA*, employing zoom shots, slow motion, and deep-focus photography to eerie advantage. Recalling the classic horror films of Val Lewton, Mackenzie (who shot Lewton's 1945 shocker *ISLE OF THE DEAD*) uses the filmmaker's well-known "bus" device (i.e., a sudden shock that takes the spectator completely by surprise) on

LEFT: An ad from the pressbook for *THE RETURN OF DRACULA* and its original, inferior companion feature, *THE FLAME BARRIER*. PAGE 43 TOP LEFT: Rachel (Norma Eberhardt) has begun to suspect that Cousin Bellac (Francis Lederer) isn't the gentleman she thinks he is—or possibly isn't a man at all! PAGE 43 TOP RIGHT: It's Tim (Ray Stricklyn) to the rescue as Bellac, revealed as Dracula, tries to put the bite on Rachel. PAGE 43 MIDDLE: The vampire kicks like a Rockette as he plunges backward into a pit. PAGE 43 BOTTOM: Impaled on a wooden stake, Count Dracula dies (an image remarkably gruesome for an American film of the period).

several occasions, most notably the quick cut to a Mickey's Halloween mask as Dracula descends upon Rachel, and a sudden appearance of Dracula behind Cora as she prepares to enter his room. MacKensie's numerous credits, dating back to 1916 and *THE ISLE OF LIFE*, include both the 1925 and 1947 versions of *SEVEN KEYS TO BALDPEATE*, *THE MAGNIFICENT AMBERSONS* (1942), and *ZOMBIES ON BROADWAY* (1945). He concluded his career with Gramercy's *THE FLAME BARRIER*.

Imbuing *THE RETURN OF DRACULA* with a malignant undercurrent above and beyond the dictates of the script, Gerald Fried's music score is perhaps the picture's greatest asset. A Juilliard graduate who began his Hollywood career writing background music for boyhood chum Stanley Kubrick's early films (1956's *THE KILLING* and 1957's *PATHS OF GLORY*), Fried employs the familiar, doom-laden Black Mass, the *Dies Irae*, as the film's main theme to convey the Satanic forces of the vampire. (Coincidentally, the same theme was used in a later Kubrick film that Fried did not score, 1980's *THE SHINING*). Fried's distinctive kinetic cues lent tension to such fifties favorites as *THE VAMPIRE, I BURY THE LIVING* (1958), *CURSE OF THE FACELESS MAN* (1958), and *THE LOST MISSILE* (1958).

In addition to using the *Dies Irae*, Fried composed a three-note motif for the film's title character, but unlike James Bernard and his work on Hammer's *HORROR OF DRACULA*, did not seek inspiration in the count's name. Said the composer in the liner notes for the Film Score CD release of *RETURN*'s score: "Had I done that (And I have done so on occasion), I would have put the emphasis on the first note . . . The emphasis here is on the third note. What I wanted was a strong statement, but askew!"

As Dracula, Francis Lederer conveys the menace, alienation, and smug superiority we've come to associate with the Vampire King, but none of the pathos that Lugosi or Carradine brought to the role. In the Universal pantheon, he most resembles Lon Chaney Jr.'s *SON OF DRACULA* (1943), though his way with dialogue is far superior. (Dracula's immigration to America may even have been suggested by *SON OF DRACULA*, though in that film the vampire found himself surrounded by Gothic romance characters, as opposed to the "just-plain-folks" he encounters in *RETURN*.) Unlike his fellow players, who perform their parts in a serious manner, Lederer brings a dash of black humor to his portrayal.

Following his stint in *THE RETURN OF DRACULA*, Lederer played a comparatively sympathetic scientist carrying on Dr. Moreau-type experiments in the Philippine-based *TERROR IS A MAN* (1960). A scheduling problem prevented him from playing the mad scientist in *DRACULA VS. FRANKENSTEIN* (1971), which, for some strange reason, he was reportedly anxious to do. (Today, Lederer denies ever wanting to appear in any horror film, much less this notorious dud.) Ailing J. Carol Naish played the part confined to a wheelchair.

Lederer once served as the honorary mayor of Canoga Park, the Los Angeles community where he invested heavily in real estate in the thirties and made a fortune. Now pushing 100, Lederer has always taken a keen interest in national and community affairs, and is a staunch sup-

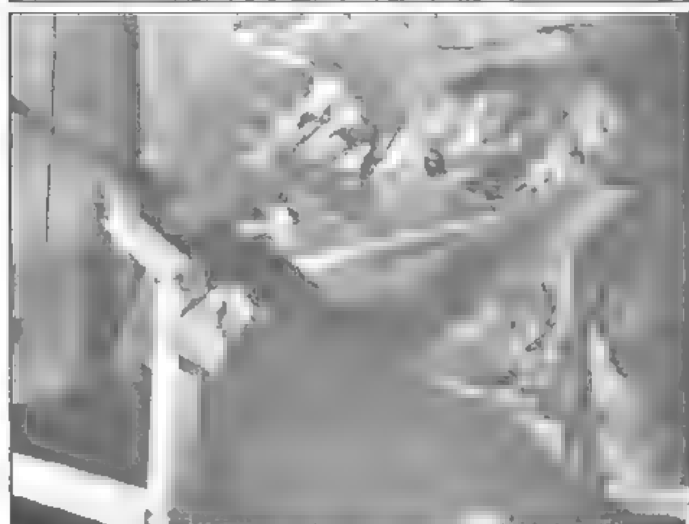


porter of the underprivileged. "I am so busy I wish there were 15 of me in order to fulfill all the obligations I have put upon myself," he once commented. Besides acting, Lederer has devoted himself to teaching his craft, as well as producing, directing, and writing.

Rating kudos in the supporting cast are German-accented John E. Wengraf as Meyerman and Virginia Vincent as the ill-fated Jenny. Wengraf's films include *SONG OF RUSSIA* (1943), *WEEKEND AT THE WALDORF* (1945), *CALL ME MADAM* (1953), *GOG* (1954), and *THE DISEMPOWERED* (1957). He made his final film appearance in 1965's *SHIP OF FOOLS*. Few horror fans know Virginia Vincent beyond this film, but her credits include 1978's *THE HILLS HAVE EYES*, 1985's *THE HILLS HAVE EYES II*, and the *KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER* episode "Firefall.") Much of *THE RETURN OF DRACULA*'s emotional impact is the result of Jenny's sad lot in life—and death. Whether alive (and blind) or dead (and summarily discarded by Dracula), the poor girl is forever a victim.

Both Norma Eberhardt and Ray Stricklyn seem a bit old as high-schoolers, though the film is vague on this point and it's possible they are attending college. Within the restraints of their roles, however, they display considerable talent and help drive the story—usually in those two-tone cars—to its shocking conclusion. Eberhardt had already been acting in Hollywood films for almost 10 years and, at the time, was married to French actor Claude Dauphin. Stricklyn, who bore a passing resemblance to Russ Tamblyn, later played Jill St. John's kid brother in the 1960 version of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *THE LOST WORLD*. In Lawrence Quirk's steamy biography *Fasten Your Seat Belts: The Passionate Life of Bette Davis* (1990), Stricklyn intimated that he and Miss Davis, whom he eventually represented in business matters, enjoyed a (possibly) intimate relationship while he was still in his twenties and she was approaching middle age. (The pair had met during the shooting of the 1956 film *THE CATERED AFFAIR*, in which Stricklyn played Davis' son.) More recently, Stricklyn has written his autobiography and set the record straight. (See Page 44.)

Greta Granstedt (whose film career consisted mostly of minor, often uncredited roles in such films as 1940's *STRANGER ON THE THIRD FLOOR*, 1940's *ROAD TO SINGAPORE*, 1946's *THE RAZOR'S EDGE*, and 1952's *THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH*), Jimmy Baird, Gage Clarke, Norbert Schiller, and William Fawcett are winning in stock parts. As Cornelia, an elderly resident of the parish house, Hope Summers inspires sympathy for the character's loneliness and need to connect with other people, while sharply delineating the pushiness that invariably keeps others at arm's length. (The actress can also be found in 1961's *HO-*



*Continued on page 73*

# Angels & Demons

Ray Stricklyn has no illusions about his movie career. He knows he never quite made it, though by way of compensation he has a large array of acting awards for his stage work, most notably in the plays of Tennessee Williams and for portraying William Zinnser in an acclaimed one-man show.

Now comes *Demons & Angels*, the actor's new autobiography, released by Delta Publishing. Thanks to this revealing and brutally frank look at his life, Stricklyn is destined to survive as more than just a footnote in Hollywood history. With remarkable candor, he discusses his homosexuality and the disordered "tinseltown" of the fifties, his drinking, his status as a "key man" when his career began to falter, his un consummated affairs with film noir's love-lorn actresses and his relationships with such famous folk as James Dean, Bette Davis, Marilyn Monroe, Tab Hunter, Joan Collins, and many more.

*Angels & Demons* takes us from Ray Stricklyn's birth in Houston, Texas, in 1929 to his Hollywood career and beyond, with amusing and informative stops to discuss his two genre films: *THE RETURN OF DRACULA* (1958) and *THE LOST WORLD* (1960). Here, in an exclusive *Scar of Street* interview, he once again opens the door on a fascinating life.

# Ray Stricklyn

interviewed by Richard Valley

*June 1981*



**Scarlet Street:** What prompted you to write your autobiography?

**Ray Stricklyn:** Well, the fact is, I really did it as therapy. I'd had some bad health news and I guess I was feeling sorry for myself. I was trying to figure out where I'd gone right or wrong in my life, so I really just started setting it down for myself, never dreaming that it would be published—otherwise I don't think I'd have been quite so revealing.

**SS:** Although you prefer not to think of it as "coming out," you write about being gay...

**RS:** It was certainly an intricate part of my life, particularly my younger life. It certainly colored some of the right and wrong decisions I made in my life, so I just included it. I certainly didn't look forward to coming out, not at this late stage of my life. Since it's not a lifestyle I actively practice any more, and haven't for years, it seems sort of strange that so many people are interested in that aspect of my life. But I had to write about it because it was the facts, really, of what made Ray Stricklyn tick.

**SS:** Why and how did you become an actor?

**RS:** Well, of course, no one in my family was involved at all in the arts. In those days, we didn't have television, so I became fascinated with acting just listening to the radio. I never really wanted to do anything else and from the time I was 10 or 11 years old, I had that desire in the back of my mind. When I got into junior high and high school, I did the typical little school plays. Then, the minute I graduated, I started doing little theater plays in Houston, and won a scholarship to the Theodora Irvine Studio for the Theatre in New York.

**SS:** One of your earliest acting jobs was in a stock production of *ARSENIC AND OLD LACE*. Though you were very young, you played an old man who is almost poisoned by the Brewster sisters—and Jonathan Brewster was played by Bela Lugosi.

**RS:** Yes. I'd seen very many of his films, but unfortunately my scene in the play wasn't with him and I never got to know him offstage very well. I was very flattered to be acting in a show with Bela Lugosi, though. He was still a very famous name.

**SS:** Now, when you were in New York you worked for *BEAT THE CLOCK*.

**RS:** I did along with James Dean. It was a very popular show, and Jimmy and I were paid five dollars and hour—if you can believe it, that was big money—we got five dollars to test the stunts that were eventually tried on the contestants. They put us in sweat suits and doused us with water and did any number of things to us. Both of us were pretty skinny and we got a lot thinner for all that work in those rubber suits! (Laughs)

**SS:** Tell us about James Dean.

**RS:** We were quite friendly. At the time we looked similar and both wore horn-rimmed glasses and had the same coloring, he was a little blonder than I was, but we were always competing for the same roles. We got to know each other just from seeing each other at interviews all the time, and doing those silly things to make a living, like *BEAT THE CLOCK*.

He'd get an interview for a play or TV show and I'd cue him and rehearse with him and things like that.

**SS:** Didn't you also kiss him?

**RS:** Yes, I did—or rather, he kissed me. It didn't go beyond that. It was just from out of the blue, I don't know what it meant, but it just happened. It was never mentioned again. Of course, I was in a relationship with another man at the time, so I didn't pursue it.

**SS:** It's been 44 years since Dean's death and there's still so much controversy surrounding his sexuality. Dennis Hopper, for example, insists that Dean had no sexual interest in men.

**RS:** Oh, I think he's in denial. Certainly in his early days, Jimmy Dean was interested in men—and, well, all his days were early



**Ray Stricklyn made one of his earliest stage appearances in the Circle-in-the-Square production of Truman Capote's *THE GRASS HARP*, opposite Clarice Blackburn.**

He definitely had his moments. He may have liked girls, too, but it's ridiculous to deny the rest. Ironically, the day I came to Hollywood was the day he got killed. I'll always remember my arrival in Hollywood because of that. I had seen him, oh two or three weeks before in New York. We went to the same bank and I remember standing in line, probably to deposit my unemployment money. (Laughs) He was standing there with a paper sack filled with cash. I think he said it was \$10,000—and he said he didn't trust Warner Bros. and he made them pay him in cash! (Laughs) I don't know if that's true, but he did have an awful lot of money in that paper bag! (Laughs) So he said, "I'll see you in Hollywood." I said, "Oh, no, I'm a New York actor, I'll never come to Hollywood." Famous last words. Shortly after that I got a small part in a movie and the day I arrived was.

**SS:** The day he died. What was your first film?

**RS:** I had one scene in *THE PROUD AND THE PROFANE* with Bill Holden and

Deborah Kerr, but I didn't come to the coast for that; we filmed that in the Virgin Islands.

**SS:** How did you get that part?

**RS:** Well, I went to an agent's office—actually I was just waiting for a friend who was trying to get an agent—and they saw me and said, "Are you here to see us?" I said, "No, I'm just waiting on him!" They said, "Oh, but we know of a part that you'd be very right for. Can we take you over to Paramount?" And I said, "Sure," much to my friends' chagrin. I went over to Paramount for like the second lead in the movie, but they said I looked too young and would I be interested in doing a smaller part. And I said, "Sure..."

**SS:** And that's how you got into movies.

**RS:** Robert Morse also made his debut in it. I had about three lines and I don't think he had any! It was also Frank Gorshin's first movie and we all three flew down to Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands together.

**SS:** What was your first film in Hollywood?

**RS:** Well, Paramount had expressed interest, so my agent said I should come out. I was immediately cast in *CRIME IN THE STREETS* which starred John Cassavetes and Sal Mineo and Mark Rydell, who went on to be a great director. I had a featured part as one of the gang members. Shortly before John died, I've been doing a play, a one-man show on the life of Tennessee Williams. This has been quite successful for me and John was too sick to come see it, but his wife, Gena Rowlands, came. I didn't know her at the time and she wrote me the loveliest fan letter. Well, John put a P.S. on it, saying that after all these years he was just thrilled for me. It was just very nice and then shortly after that he passed away.

**SS:** *CRIME IN THE STREETS* was directed by Don Siegel.

**RS:** Yes, Don Siegel directed it. That's indirectly how I got into *THE RETURN OF DRACULA*, with Don Siegel as one of the producers.

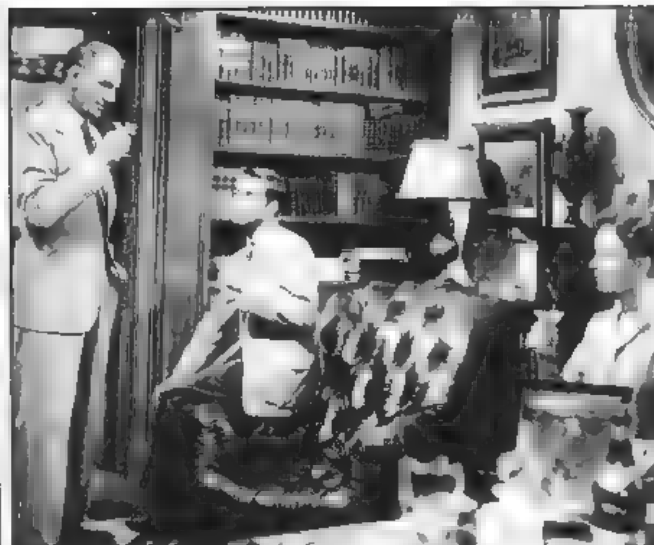
**SS:** Some actors swore by Don Siegel and other actors swore at him! What was your impression of Siegel?

**RS:** Well, he certainly gave me no problem. I thought he was one of the better directors. Of course, I was very young and new to film. But I liked him and when he cast me in *RETURN OF DRACULA* I was certainly in his corner.

**SS:** You write in your book about the many roles you were up for and lost. Was it difficult to deal with the rejection of losing roles to other actors?

**RS:** Well, that's part of the business. There's more rejection, certainly, than acceptance for almost every actor. I never attained real stardom, and I think one of the values of my book is that fact. There are dozens and dozens of celebrity books out, but there haven't been too many by people who didn't make it big. I think my book is more a true telling of what it's like for the average actor.

**SS:** You write honestly about your alcoholism, too. Was that a result of social drinking or do you think the constant rejection played a part in the problem?



**LEFT:** Ray Stricklyn and Norma Eberhardt had no trouble doing "the floor thing" in *THE RETURN OF DRACULA* (1958), but they couldn't manage "the bed thing" when the cameras weren't running. **RIGHT:** Ray had his most notable movie role in *TEN NORTH FREDERICK* (1958), opposite Gary Cooper and Geraldine Fitzgerald.

**RS:** It was probably a combination, but I think the disappointment I felt in the sixties when my career wasn't going well and I couldn't get employed—I think that certainly pushed me along with my drinking. I wasn't a falling down drunk or anything like that, and I wasn't a secret drinker, but I was a loner a good deal of the time and did a lot of my drinking at home. Eventually an aborted romance late in life sent me to the bottom—and thank God it did, because it saved my life and got me to join AA.

**SS:** Do you feel most drinkers have to reach that bottom level of crisis before they can start to pick themselves up?

**RS:** That's usually the case, because most of us deny that we have that problem. I could go for weeks without drinking, but when I would drink it would be binges. As I say, I didn't fall down drunk in public, thank goodness, but I certainly was destroying myself at home.

**SS:** How secret did you have to keep your sexuality when you were making films in the fifties and sixties? Were your coworkers aware that you were gay?

**RS:** Oh, they may have been aware, but it was just not a subject that was ever brought up—at least with me, anyway. My personal friends knew the score, of course, but it was not something I told anyone unless it was a very close friend.

**SS:** You were under contract to 20th Century. Did they arrange dates for you so that your name would be linked with women?

**RS:** Dates were arranged, of course, but the reason was never brought up. It was never mentioned to me, anyway. I got in on the tail end of the contract system. Eventually, in 1958 I was put under contract at Fox, and that was towards the very end of the system. Universal lasted longer than any other studio with contract players, but I was really only involved in the last two or three years of

that system. It was like a family with all us young kids just starting out. There was Joan Collins and Lee Remick...

**SS:** Did the studio system try to make you a teen idol?

**RS:** Well, they pushed me when I did *TEN NORTH FREDERICK* with Gary Cooper which was probably the best picture I did for Fox. In fact, I made it right after I did *DRACULA* and it was my biggest break up to that point. That's what put me under contract to Fox. And they really did try things! Put me in the fan magazines and all that, but I never honestly had a smashing success in the movies so it didn't go very far!

**SS:** A popular teen idol of the period that you mention in your book is Tab Hunter. In fact, you mention going to bed with him.

**RS:** We had sex two times and I think it was over in five minutes. And that was it, really.

**SS:** Not even dinner?

**LEFT:** *THE REMARKABLE MR. PENNYPACKER* (1959) starred Clifton Webb as a bigamist with one family in Philadelphia and the other in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Ray played the oldest son in the Philadelphia family. **RIGHT:** *THE LOST WORLD* (1960) had an excellent cast (Fernando Lamas, Jay Novello, Michael Rennie, David Hedison, Richard Haydn, Jill St. John, and Ray Stricklyn) in a not very excellent movie based on the classic Arthur Conan Doyle story. Claude Rains (not pictured) played Professor Challenger.



***"Actually, Norma and I were rather close during the filming of THE RETURN OF DRACULA. I liked her very, very much and she was great to be around. We tried the bed scene and that didn't work. I was trying very hard, but not hard enough—or rather I couldn't get it hard enough!"***

**RS:** No, not even dinner! (Laughs) I think I was just a trick, as we called it in those days. He was a very nice man, and still is—in fact, I worked with him years later in public relations, when he was doing LUST IN THE DUST with Divine. I became reacquainted with him during that period, but our past liaison was never mentioned.

**SS:** You were in *THE CATERED AFFAIR*, with Bette Davis, Ernest Borgnine, Debbie Reynolds, Barry Fitzgerald. . .

**RS:** Directed by Richard Brooks.

**SS:** Davis, Borgnine, and Fitzgerald were all Oscar winners.

**RS:** In fact, Borgnine won his Oscar while we were making the film. I was in awe of Bette Davis, not the others so much. I had a small part, but I was there a lot and she couldn't have been nicer. I didn't really get to know her until later, when I played a leading role with her on a television show and again played her son. That was on SCHLITZ PLAYHOUSE. A script called "For Better For Worse."

**SS:** Unlike such major studio features as *SOMEBODY UP THERE LIKES ME* and *TEN NORTH FREDERICK*, *THE RETURN OF DRACULA* was a low-budget, independent effort.

**RS:** I had just gotten *THE LAST WAGON* at Fox with Richard Widmark, and then I got a call for an interview to meet the *DRACULA* producers, Arthur Gardner and Jules Levy. I didn't know that Don Siegel was part of their production company. When I got there he was in the office, so at first I thought he was directing the film. My audition consisted of the fact that he knew me from *CRIME IN THE STREETS*. He didn't ask me to read or anything, but Norma Eberhardt was there—she had already been cast—and my audition consisted of whether I could pick her up from a dead faint! (Laughs) I wasn't the most muscular juvenile in the world, but I could manage to scoop her up. Then, when we actually shot the film, I dropped her. (Laughs) Norma and I became very good friends! I remember most that she had a blue eye and a brown eye.

**SS:** How long was the shooting schedule for *RETURN OF DRACULA*?

**RS:** Oh, three weeks, which in those days was pretty good.

**SS:** Didn't leave a lot of time for retakes?

**RS:** No, it didn't!

**SS:** Except when you dropped Norma. . .

**RS:** Take two! (Laughs) Actually, when I was making *DRACULA*, I was thinking about *TEN NORTH FREDERICK*. I had tested for *TEN NORTH FREDERICK*, which was a very good part. I knew it would be the best thing I'd yet gotten. Spencer Tracy was going to star, and he

had cast approval. They gave me a screen test, but then I didn't hear anything and weeks went by and I figured they had given it to Robert Wagner. Then I got the *Dracula* film and I still hadn't heard anything. I picked up the trades one day and Tracy was out and Gary Cooper had been chosen for the lead. Well, we were doing some night shooting for the Halloween party scene, and a prominent agent, Dick Clayton, stopped by the location and said, "Congratulations!" I said, "For what?" and he said "I hear you got *TEN NORTH FREDERICK*." So I remember *RETURN OF DRACULA* mainly because I got the news that I had won the role in *TEN NORTH FREDERICK*!

**SS:** What can you tell us about Francis Lederer, who played *Dracula*?

**RS:** Well, I didn't know Francis terribly well, then, but in recent years I did talk to him on the phone. His wife had come to see me do my one-man show and was ecstatic about it. In my program bio, it said I had been in *DRACULA*, and she went home and told Francis. Then he called me and we had a lovely, lovely chat. He hasn't done anything for years. He's terribly, terribly wealthy, I understand. Real estate!

**SS:** Speaking of real estate, you filmed the final scenes of *RETURN OF DRACULA* at Bronson Canyon.

**RS:** Right! That's where I dropped Norma! (Laughs) It was kind of spooky in the cave, but it wasn't really very dangerous. Besides, I was too busy trying to pick her up!

**SS:** Oh, so you were trying to pick her up.

**RS:** Yes! Yes! (Laughs) Actually, we were rather close during the filming of *THE RETURN OF DRACULA*. I liked her very, very much and she was great fun to be around. We tried the bed scene and that didn't work. . . .

**SS:** You tried the bed scene with a number of women over the years.

**RS:** Yes, I was trying very hard, but not hard enough—or rather I couldn't get it hard enough! (Laughs)

**SS:** The ending of *RETURN OF DRACULA*, in which the vampire falls into the pit and is impaled on a stake, was pretty gruesome for a fifties film!

**RS:** Not only that, but when the picture was first released in the theaters, when they put the stake through the girl's heart, the film went into Technicolor and blood poured out. It was just for that one shot; the rest, of course, is in black and white.

**SS:** Of course, if Ted Turner got his hands on it.

**RS:** Then the whole film would be in color! (Laughs)

**SS:** In 1960, you made *THE LOST WORLD*. What was it like acting opposite a bunch of magnified lizards?

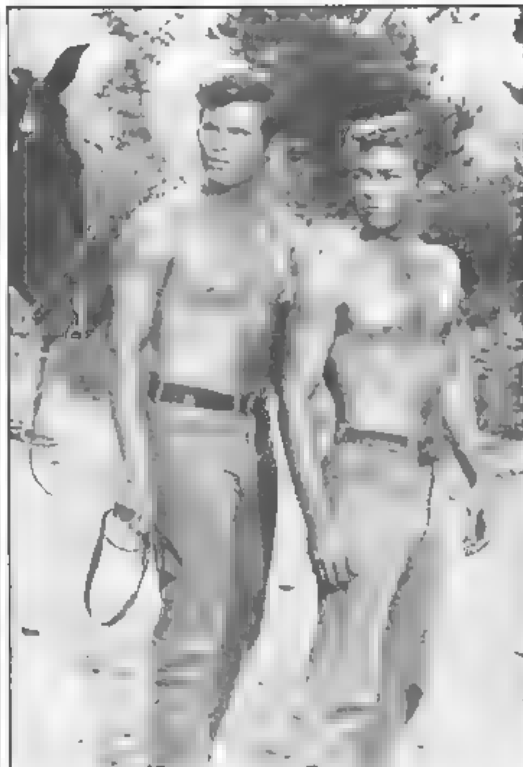
**RS:** Well, they were really process shots, so we were standing in front of a big screen with the lizards all blown up behind us. They were actually very tiny, normal-sized lizards that they blew up to become these monsters. That was a frustrating shoot. I remember, sometimes I would drive Claude Rains home and I finally—cause I always admired him, he was one of my favorite actors—I finally said, "Mr. Rains, why are you doing this picture?" And he said, "Oh, my dear boy, for the same reason you are—the money!" (Laughs) Except that he was getting a lot more!

**SS:** Was *THE LOST WORLD* a very tightly budgeted film?

**RS:** Well, that *CLEOPATRA* debacle was going on and the studio was in financial straits. Then we had the writers strike or directors strike or producers strike or something, and they shut the picture down for six weeks. Maybe it was an actors strike, but there was a strike! I re-







**LEFT:** Years after acting together in *THE CATERED AFFAIR* (1956) and on television, Bette Davis and Ray Stricklyn became actress and public relations representative. According to Ray's autobiography, *Angels and Demons* (Belle Publishing, 1999) Davis would have preferred to carry the relationship even further. **RIGHT:** Ty Hardin and Ray in a beefcake pose from an episode of *BRONCO*.

member J.L. St. John was going to get married to Lance Runtelaw, who had millions and she was waiting for the picture to finish so they could get married. She said, "Oh, Lance has more money than Fox does, he'll finish financing the movie!" (Laughs)

**SS:** Meanwhile, everything was at a standstill.

**RS:** But that's how I met Marilyn Monroe and Yves Montand, who were making *LET'S MAKE LOVE* at the time. I had a late call one day, noon or something, and when I arrived nobody was doing anything. I asked Michael Rennie, "Why isn't anyone working?" He said "Oh, we're on strike!" Well, it turned out that the studio had decided to save money and they removed our coffee from the set! And so the actors went on strike!

**SS:** As though skipping coffee was going to save the studio.

**RS:** Really! But the thing is, Marilyn Monroe and Rennie were friendly and she called and said, "How's your movie going?" He said "Oh, we're on strike!" And he told her why and she said, "You want your coffee back? I'll tell him I won't work until you get your coffee back!" Well, of course we had our coffee back within the hour! (Laughs) You know, *THE LOST WORLD* was a very successful picture box-office-wise, but let's face it—Irwin Allen wasn't exactly the world's greatest director.

**SS:** Was *THE LOST WORLD* shot on location at all?

**RS:** It was shot entirely on the fabulous back lot, which is now Century City. The huge, huge cave sequences were sets that had been originally built for *JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH*.

**SS:** Between films, you were still making stage appearances. You were in a stage production of *LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT* with, of all people, Jody McCrea.

**RS:** Oh, right! (Laughs) Not a very good production. Jody had really been set to do a frivolous comedy, which he'd probably have been right for, but for some reason they didn't do it. They had a contract, so they put him in *LONG DAY'S JOURNEY* in a part he was totally wrong for, and it was disastrous. I don't think he'd ever previously been on a stage! If you've never been on a stage, that's not the place to start!

**SS:** He was in a film by the same people who produced your *Dracula* movie—*THE MONSTER THAT CHALLENGED THE WORLD*.

**RS:** Missed that one. (Laughs)

**SS:** You didn't do anything on film between 1960 and 1965, then you appeared in *ARIZONA RAIDERS*.

**RS:** I had a very rough period there. First of all, I looked so young for too long when I was 30, I was still getting calls to play teenagers—and then I suddenly grew out of them. The work started getting less and less. I hung on by doing regional theater and an occasional television show, but steady work was very sparse. Finally, I came to my senses and that's when I started working in PR. I didn't do that till 1973, so it took me a few years to pull my act together.

**SS:** In 1968, you made *TRACK OF THUNDER* with Tommy Kirk. His career was also in trouble—much of it from drinking and drugs. He had been fired by Walt Disney over a scandal involving Tommy's homosexuality.

**RS:** He was very nice, but I do remember him saying—he didn't mention his sexu-

ality at that time, but I do remember his drinking being a problem. He talked about that.

**SS:** What television shows did you do around this time?

**RS:** Well, I did *PERRY MASON*. I did two of those. "The Case of the Bashful Burro" and one other. I did a mystery show at Warner Bros. in the late fifties, too. *BOURBON STREET BEAT*, with Andrew Duggan, Richard Long, and Van Williams. I was the guest lead and Mary Tyler Moore played my wife. I just remember that she had the most beautiful legs I've ever seen. I killed her—or maybe it was my mother. Jeanette Nolan played my mother and maybe she killed her! (Laughs) I think they thought I killed her, but it turned out that my mother killed her. Sort of a reverse *PSYCHO*!

**SS:** Did the start of the gay rights movement in the late sixties affect you personally?

**RS:** No. I just wasn't a part of it. I wasn't involved in the gay scene at that time. I'd withdrawn from sex completely and was a recluse in that area.

**SS:** Although you weren't openly gay, you played a lot of gay characters onstage.

**RS:** That's true. I did *COMPUTATION* when I was young and still doing a lot of movies, but it was such a great role that I didn't worry about any repercussions. Dean Stockwell had played it in New York and it certainly hadn't hurt him. After I'd been out of the business for a number of years and doing PR work, I went back and played a number of gay roles. By then, I was a man in my fifties and I didn't think twice about it, because I had

*Continued on page 70*



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# *Norma Eberhardt*

interviewed by Danny Savello



**Norma Eberhardt:** Oh, I knew prettier girls around, I think, than Marilyn Monroe! The ones that are around right now are prettier and have more finesse and class than she ever could! Not Kim Basinger, though....

**Scarlet Street?** No?

**NE:** The girls back then were nothing special. Ann Sheridan wasn't, and Dorothy Lamour was never a beauty. Anyway...

**SS:** So what did you do at Universal?

**NE:** Not much! They'd stuck me in a lot of different costumes and we'd all go stand around in a barroom scene—and that's how I got to know Miss Liar of the Century, Shelley Winters! She was in the midst of her affair with Burt Lancaster at the time. He bought her a house on a hill overlooking Sunset Boulevard and I'd go to barbecues. Tony Curtis would be there, badmouthing her behind her back. Anyway, she turned out to be a dreadful bitch, dreadful bitch and a liar! Oh, a terrible liar!

**SS:** What did she do to make you say that?

**NE:** Why, she called my husband—I'd been married a few months to Claude Dauphin—she called and told him I was having an affair with Tony Franciosa, who was her fiancé at the time. Claude was doing a play with Maggie Sullivan and Bob Preston, and I came in from the market to cook dinner. I'll never forget, I had lamb chops and he looked at me and said, "Where have you been?" I said, "Across the street, getting these." And he said, "I don't like it when Miss Shelley Winters calls and says every day you and Tony have been having an affair." Well, I took the phone and called up Tony and said, "Shelley just called my husband and said we were having an affair"—and Tony went and beat her up and then took an overdose of pills and couldn't work that day in *A HATFUL OF RAIN*.

**SS:** When did you marry Claude Dauphin?

**NE:** May 21, 1955, in Oakhurst. My hometown, at the church that I said I'd never step on again, which I didn't until the day I married him.

**SS:** Your husband had a better movie of his career than Warner Bros. *THE PHANTOM OF THE KAT MURDER*.

**NE:** Oh, yes! That's when I first knew him! He was wonderful, he was always doped up with morphine. Oh, he was fabulous! He took morphine all the time and he said, "Would you like some, my dear?" So I took a shot just to see what it was like. That's very addictive stuff! Oh, he was so cute when he was young! Merv Griffin was in *PHANTOM*, too. That's how Claude first met Mervin and that's why Merv always had him on his show whenever he came to New York; oh, he did a lot of Merv Griffin's shows. Merv thought of Claude as the French Spencer Tracy! I'll never forget, he came to Paris and he and Claude were on the Seine in a little boat, and Merv said, "I'm being shown Paris by the French Spencer Tracy, who's the only other actor I know, besides myself, who owns property in New Jersey." (Laughs)

**SS:** So that was it for you at Universal—just a bunch of bit parts?

**NE:** They had a lot of independent companies making films for them at the time. For instance, that's where I did *LIVE FAST, DIE YOUNG*, but Universal really had nothing to do with it. If they had, they probably wouldn't have allowed me on the lot. I'll never forget—the day Universal didn't pick up my option, there was such a rumor going around town. That night I was at Orbach's—not the store, the family—I was at a party, and Bruce Cabot was there and a lot of very important people. Well, Lana Turner came up and said, "I understand that you broke apart a dressing room today." I said, "Where?" "At Universal! It's all over town. It's going to be in the papers to-



Though they were both in the vicinity of 30, Norma Eberhardt and Ray Stricklyn played the teenage lovers menaced by *THE RETURN OF DRACULA* (1958).

morrow that you took perfume bottles and broke all the mirrors at Universal in a fit, a temper tantrum!" I said, "I wasn't even there today. I haven't been there in days!" It turned out a columnist from New York, Louis Sokol, reported it! He said, "Oh, I meant to tell you about that! That's what I heard." I never found out who started the rumor, but I think it was started by this little creep named Marty Ragaway, who was a writer. He used to see me a lot with Frank Sinatra. We'd go to a drive-in for a hamburger and we'd ignore Marty. He'd be in another car and we'd look at him like he was a bug, which he really was, he was a miserable little guy.

**SS:** How did you get cast in *THE RETURN OF DRACULA*?

**NE:** You know, I don't remember! I know I was at the Hal Roach Studio doing a lot of television, and *DRACULA* was shot there, so maybe that's the connection. I had done a pilot show called *THE LAW*

*1933 YEARS*, with Dorothy Provine. I did a couple of episodes of something entitled *THE BEST OF THE POST*. They were stories from *The Saturday Evening Post*. Lee Philips was an actor in one, and the director was a well-known actor at the time: Don Taylor. He gave Elizabeth Taylor—no relation—her first screen kiss in *FATHER OF THE BRIDE*. He was a good-looking young actor at the time, and then he became a director. I did a lot of television. Jack Webb even wrote a *DRAGNET* for me. He said, "I'm going to tailor a *DRAGNET* just for you!"—and he did! He wrote it just for me, and called it "The Big Starlet."

**SS:** Jack Webb must have really appreciated your talent.

**NE:** Oh, Webb drove me crazy, because we weren't allowed to memorize any of the lines! We had to read them on what they now call the idiot box, the dialogue rolls in front of you. It drove me nuts to have to look to one side to read the dialogue, and to talk in this monotone. Anyway, Webb wanted me for another one, but I couldn't, I was working on something else down at Repulsive Studios. That's what we called Republic. (Laughs)

**SS:** You did an *ALFRED HITCHCOCK PRESENTS* episode, too, didn't you?

**NE:** Oh, yes! And I did a lot of hour-long dramas with accents—Swedish and German and British and Cockney and Irish and Scottish. All I had to do was listen and I could pick up an accent fast. Anyway, I think the *DRACULA* people had seen my TV work.

**SS:** Didn't Jack Webb refer to a show your husband did as the French *DRAGNET*?

**NE:** Yes. He said, "I understand that Claude and Louis Jourdan are now the French *DRAGNET*," because their show was called *PARIS PRECINCT*. I was also on *CAPTAIN GALLANT OF THE FOREIGN LEGION*, with Buster Crabbe. I happened to catch those in the seventies at six o'clock in the morning, when I was living with Macdonald Carey. He'd get up to go off to the studio and I'd get up to make him breakfast whatever, and then I'd hear this terribly familiar voice on the television and my God, it was me! I couldn't believe it! So, of course I watched *CAPTAIN GALLANT OF THE FOREIGN LEGION* every morning!

**SS:** How long was the shooting schedule for *THE RETURN OF DRACULA*?

**NE:** Two weeks, if not less. I have a feeling we did it faster. I mean, it was like all day long and into the night, one thing after the other; it was very crazed. And it was filmed at the Hal Roach Studio.

**SS:** Hal Roach Studio and Bronson Canyon.

**NE:** Oh, dear Lord, yes! When we first walked into the cave, it was all lit for filming, and I saw all these streaks of gold painted on the walls. I said, "What's all this?" They said, "Oh, this has been used for years for Westerns and cave-ins." Then I saw this pit and said, "What are you doing?" "Oh, we're photographing the last scene"—which was the disintegration of Francis Lederer as Dracula and he wasn't even around yet! (Laughs)

**SS:** Did you like Francis Lederer?



**TOP LEFT:** Norma Eberhardt thinks highly of Virginia Vincent's performance as *THE RETURN OF DRACULA*'s blind girl turned vampire, but never saw or heard of the actress again after making the film. **TOP RIGHT:** Norma and Ray Stricklyn became fast friends during the making of *THE RETURN OF DRACULA*—but not *this fast*! **LEFT:** Norma made *LIVE FAST, DIE YOUNG* (1958) on the Universal lot, but happily Universal knew nothing about it. **RIGHT:** Norma's husband-to-be, Claude Dauphin (second from the right), starred in a horror movie on his own at Warner Bros.: *THE PHANTOM OF THE RUE MORGUE* (1954).

**NE:** Oh, let me tell you—he was the sweetest, most charming, adorable man! He was gorgeous! Well, I thought he was gorgeous! He had a little Minox, he took hundreds of photographs of me, constantly, every day, all day, in the dressing room, here and there, always photographing me! He was sweet, really sweet.

**SS:** How about Ray Stricklyn?

**NE:** Oh, Ray and I became great friends! Great pals!

**SS:** Wasn't there gossip at the time about him having an affair with Bette Davis, his costar in *THE CATERED AFFAIR*?

**NE:** An affair? An affair with Bette Davis? Oh, please! When I first met Ray, he was living with a guy and was good friends with Phyllis Gates, who had married and divorced Rock Hudson. Rock showed her his tapeworm on their honeymoon. But anyway, Ray was living with this guy who was the product of some Royal affair and he lived in a beautiful house in the Hollywood Hills, a gorgeous house, and this guy was Ray's lover. And he was out of town at the time we were doing *THE RETURN OF DRACULA*, and Ray took

me there for dinner. And there was an enormous portrait done by Diego Rivera of Ruth Ford in her very young days.

**SS:** What about Virginia Vincent, who played the blind girl in the *Dracula* film?

**NE:** I haven't a clue! I met her when we did *DRACULA* and I never saw her again. I saw her in a couple of things after that. She's very good, but I don't know whatever happened to her. The producers were Jules Levy and Arthur Gardner. Arthur's sister, Margaret, is a friend of mine. She lives in London, she's a very big public relations girl-woman. In fact, about two weeks ago Rex Reed said, "Margaret was here! And I took her up to my house in Connecticut." I said, "Thank you for telling me when she's gone!" And he said, "How the hell could I find you? You've been staying with this friend of yours who's very, very ill, taking care of him." He died. But Virginia Vincent, I don't know what happened to her.

**SS:** How about Jimmy Baird, who played your brother Mickey?

**NE:** I haven't a clue! I didn't even know his name! He was there maybe one day

two days at the most. Greta Grandstedt, who played my mother, did everything in one day and was out. Maybe two days. Oh, there was a wonderful actor in the film—Charlie Tannen. He played the inspector with the Zippo. I remembered him because his father was famous around the turn of the century. His father was the biggest man in vaudeville. Jules Tannen. He was an old, old, elderly gentleman up in his eighties when I met him in the fifties. His son Charlie played the inspector who photographs Dracula and you can't see him in the pictures because he's a vampire.

**SS:** Do you remember anyone else in *THE RETURN OF DRACULA*?

**NE:** Jules Levy's wife was in the Halloween party scene. You know, they all went on to produce *THE BIG VALLEY*; they gave Linda Evans a big push and then they gave Barbara Stanwyck a series and they all got rich!

**SS:** Were you a horror film fan yourself at the time you made *DRACULA*?

**NE:** No! But I'll tell you, it's well regarded—Francis even asked me if I

***"When I first met Ray Stricklyn, he was good friends with Phyllis Gates, who had married and divorced Rock Hudson. Rock showed her his tapeworm on their honeymoon. But anyway, Ray was living with this guy who was the product of some Royal affair and he lived in a beautiful house in the Hollywood Hills, a gorgeous house, and this guy was Ray's lover...."***

wanted to go with him to the Magic Castle, because the Count Dracula Society was going to induct him into their hall of fame. (Laughs) But will I go out of my way to look at a Dracula film? No, although I like the ones with Christopher Lee. I adore him! I like mysteries, too. Levinson and Link—they did MURDER SHE WROTE and COLOMBO—they were at my apartment for a dinner party for a film-critic friend of mine named Hollis Alpert. I invited Irving and Sylvia Wallace because Hollis wanted to meet Irving Wallace. Anyway they were all over for dinner and Levinson and Link would tell me plots and I would tell them how it would end. I solved every one of them and they asked "How do you do that? Do you have a spy over at Universal?" I said, "I swear I don't!" I'm just good at figuring them out. You know, they retitled THE RETURN OF DRACULA for TV.

**SS:** It's called THE CURSE OF DRACULA.

**NE:** That title is so disgusting. The original version had a color scene. They drove a stake through Virginia Vincent's heart and the screen showed it red on her dress. Francis and I went to a screening, and I had a girlfriend with me. the

mistress of Jack Warner, and they didn't tell us that this was coming up. And everybody screamed! It was mostly a black-and-white film, though—the last black-and-white Dracula made. I told that to Frank Langella, who played Dracula on Broadway. We were going to a party. The producer hired a bus to take us to Cape May; we all met at the theater where Langella was doing DRACULA. Anyway, I told him I was in the last black-and-white Dracula and he said, "What does that mean?" And I said, "I made the last black-and-white Dracula film in Hollywood," and he said, "Well, what was the title?" I said, THE RETURN OF DRACULA. He said, "I never heard of it." I said, "Well, Francis Lederer played Dracula." And he said, "Who?" And I said, "Francis Lederer. He was on Broadway long before you. You'd better read up on your history—that way you'll find out that he was married to Margo, who was in the original LOST HORIZON, and she later married Eddie Albert and got as big as a house. Francis was madly in love with her and was devastated when she left him." Well, he looked at me like I was insane and we ignored one another for the rest

of the trip! (Laughs) Do you remember Laurence Harvey?

**SS:** Of course. A woman we know wanted to marry him.

**NE:** He was gay!

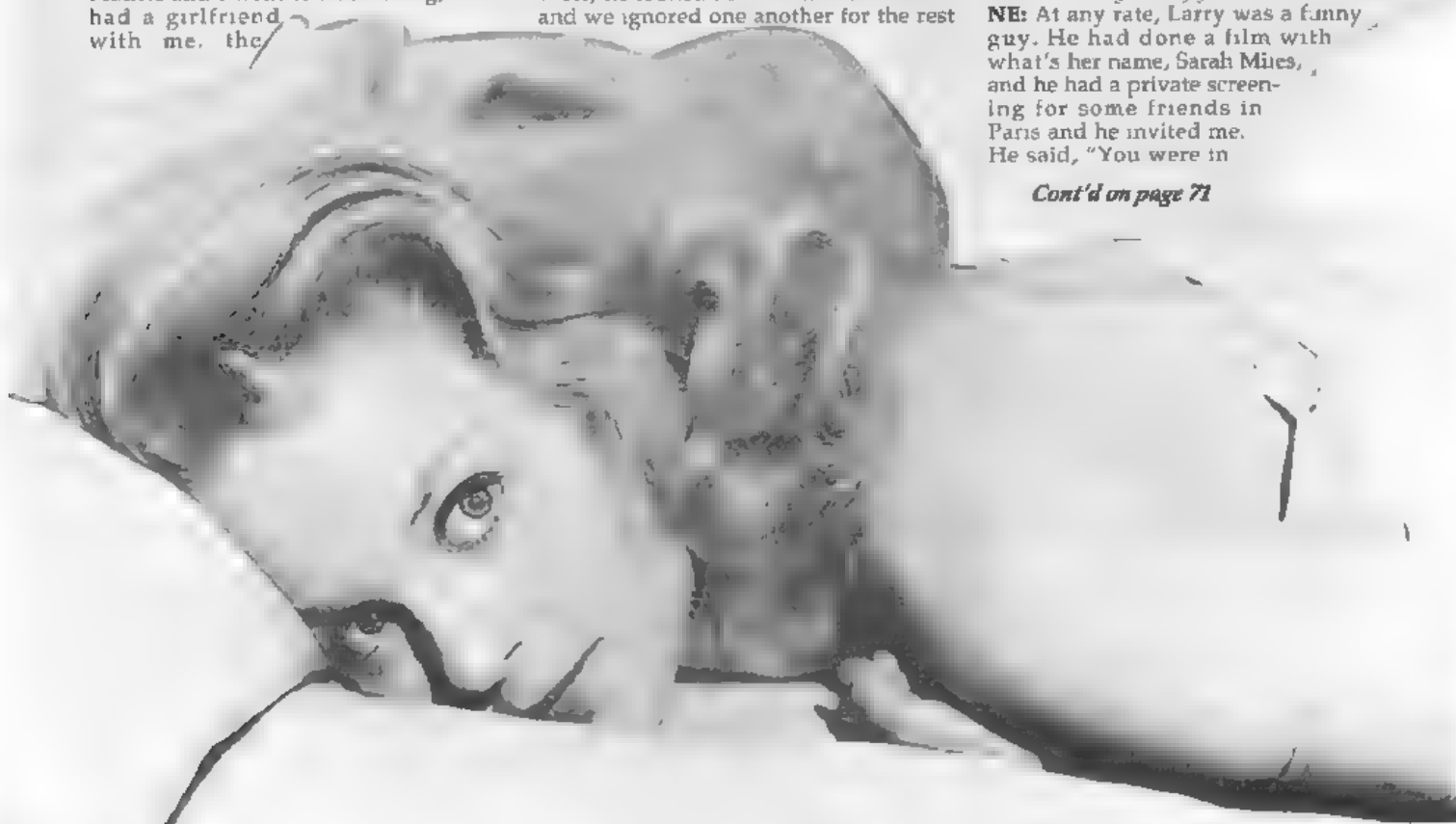
**SS:** Well, that figures.

**NE:** He went both ways. He married Joan Cohn, the widow of Harry Cohn who owned Columbia. And he did that for political reasons. But there's a funny story about Larry Harvey and RETURN OF DRACULA—but, oh I remember once when I saw him in the Beverly Hills Hotel. He was visiting Elizabeth Taylor, who'd separated from Richard Burton, and there was a guy outside the room sitting at a table with a cross on it and a gun, to guard the jewels. And Larry came up with Roddy McDowall and he said, "I'm going to see Liz; come on with us." So I went in with Larry and Roddy McDowall and, boy, did we get drunk! And there was so much pot! It was terrific! Actually, I don't drink—but the other stuff I liked. I don't do those things anymore; I don't snort or take anything. I don't even smoke cigarettes.

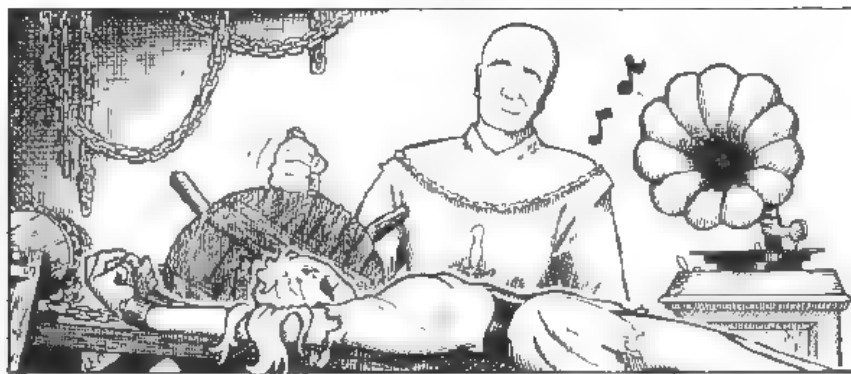
**SS:** That's very wise of you.

**NE:** At any rate, Larry was a funny guy. He had done a film with what's her name, Sarah Miles, and he had a private screening for some friends in Paris and he invited me. He said, "You were in

*Cont'd on page 71*







# Record Rack

by Ross Care

## Adventures on Marco Polo

With many classic film score series now apparently (and lamentably) in story, it seems left to the steadfast Marco Polo label to carry the banner of vintage score recording into the millennium.

Over the past years, MP and its reliable team of conductor William Stromberg and reconstructionist John Morgan, have produced an outstanding and varied collection of (often complete) classic score CDs that gets better with each new release.

*Scarlet Street* showcased THE UNINVITED (1944) in Issue #12, and THE CLASSIC FILM MUSIC OF VICTOR YOUNG (MP 8 225063) materialized shortly thereafter, with a suite from the ghost classic *Young*, who worked primarily for Paramount but free-lanced at every studio from MGM to Republic, is so well remembered for his classic pop tunes that his substantial orchestral scores tend to be overlooked. (FOR WHOM THE BELLS TOLL, composed one year before THE UNINVITED, is a now little-heard masterpiece of dramatic underscoring.) One of Young's greatest hits evolved from his UNINVITED score: "Stella by Starlight," developed from the romantic theme a young composer (Ray Milland) in the film writes for the beautiful, harassed Stella (for star) played by Gail Russell. First showcased in the main title, and later heard in a piano concerto mode à la Rachmaninov, lyrics were added by Ned Washington and a popular standard and jazz classic was born. ("Stella" is also that rarity among pop tunes, a through-composed song, i.e., no melodic phrase is repeated within the usually standard 32-bar/AABA song structure, here stretched to ABCD!) Aside from presenting the expansive "Stella" theme in its original orchestral guise, this disc restores all of Young's eerie ghost music, some deleted in the release print and it is classic Hollywood supernatural. Also heard are some surprisingly impressive excerpts from the Fleischer studio's animated GULLIVER'S TRAVELS (1939) and two other Young scores.

The music of the too seldom recorded Hugo Friedhofer is explored on THE ADVENTURES OF MARCO POLO (MP 8 223857). While often immediately appealing (see the rousing SEVEN CITIES OF GOLD here), some of Fried-

hofer's music is also quite subtle, so I will suggest potential listeners give this disc the time it deserves. For example, I was initially most drawn to the sensual Hollywood exoticism of THE RAJAS OF RANCHIPUR (1955), but after a few listenings came around to the disc's real highlight, a 10-movement suite from THE LODGER, a 1944 Fox thriller with Laird Cregar as Jack the Ripper (though I immediately loved the cue title "Mr

Slade Has Nerves"). While the music does rise to brilliant peaks for some of the more dramatic cues ("Murder," "Alarms and Excursions"), LODGER is light years away from Pete Rugolo's lurid (but also great!) 1960 RIPPER music. Friedhofer's approach is psychologically probing, often haunting, and eschews clichés of any kind. (Note especially the beautiful passage near the end of "Mr Slade Moves In.") As Tony Thomas comments: "Drenched in swirling fog and damp night air, THE LODGER is also drenched in Friedhofer's music, underlining the horror and sadness of it all. The intelligence used in scoring films of this kind is vital." A wonderful Friedhofer overview, from ADVENTURES OF MARCO POLO in 1939 to 1955's brilliantly orchestrated SEVEN CITIES OF GOLD, this is also one of the finest discs in the fine MP series, and an invaluable record of some of the most original music ever composed in Hollywood.

## Two Giants

Two other recent MP releases provide reconstituted musical backgrounds for two legendary giants of literature and film. MOBY DICK (MP 8 225050) offers the complete score to John Huston's 1956 film of the Herman Melville novel. I was impressed with MOBY DICK when I first saw it at an impressionable age, finding the special effects (which even Huston has since disparaged), especially the final confrontation with the monstrous white whale, duly nightmarish. But even more impressive was the stirring symphonic score by Philip Sauton. A now rare RCA soundtrack was even released (RCA LPM 1247), which, in spite of an unprepossessing cover (a black and white closeup of a grimacing Gregory Peck as Captain Ahab), provided a welcome and smoothly edited LP of some of the most thrilling film music I had heard up to that point.

Little was heard from or about Sauton after the release of Huston's film, but in 1997 MOBY DICK was reanimated on Marco Polo, stimulating a revival of interest in the composer's sole film score. Sauton himself belongs to that wonderful early 20th century school of British composers whose work is only recently coming to light on CD. Including John Ireland, George Butterworth, Gerald Finzi (one of Bernard Herrmann's per-



Does KING KONG really have it bad for Fay Wray, or he is just stringing her (and Bruce Cabot) along? The 1933 film and its background music by Max Steiner is credited with having started underscoring.

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**TOP LEFT:** One of Bette Davis' lesser known films, but one of her best, is *MR. SKEFFINGTON* (1944), costarring Claude Rains in the title role. Pictured with Davis and Rains is Walter Abel. **TOP RIGHT:** *THE UNINVITED* (1944) is one of the few films of the supernatural to sport a hit song—in this case, the haunting "Stella by Starlight." Pictured: Alan Napier, Ray Milland, Gail Russell (as Stella), and Ruth Hussey. **RIGHT:** Captain Ahab (Gregory Peck) tries to sever his ties to *MOBY DICK* (1956) in the John Huston classic.



sonal favorites), and others who shook off the Elgarian/Germanic influence on British concert music, their work has a unique aura of transcendence that is evident throughout *MOBY DICK*. Based on only a few terse motifs, and (like "Stella by Starlight") mostly through-composed, this 63:10 reconstruction reveals Saindon's cohesive score as one of the most developed ever, and a perfect musical counterpart of Melville's complex novel. Commencing in a spirited mode of the sea and old whaling days, it moves with no flagging of energy into the darker, obsessively horrific elements of the final denouement, including eerie music with wordless women's voices for the scene in which the Pequod is touched by Saint Elmo's Fire. Huston's film is generally considered an "interesting," if flawed, grace-note in a varied and provocative career. The same cannot be said about Saindon's score, which remains a unique and nearly lost masterpiece, at last revived here in a vivid reconstruction.

Another newly complete (72:19) recording, and one worthy of more attention than I'm able to give here, is Max Steiner's *KING KONG* (MP 8 223763). Originally heard in 1933, *KONG* is often cited as the first fully developed original score composed for a feature film, and a landmark in establishing the sound of decades of Hollywood scoring. While Morgan has obviously striven to be faithful to the Steiner classic, he comments in his liner notes: "For this recording our goal was to be as authentic to Steiner's original sketches and intentions as possible, but without the compromises necessitated by budget and sound limitations of the period. At the same time, I did not want to lose that certain quirky, individual sound that the *KONG* score is known for. I reorchestrated the score with the intention of doing it the way Steiner

would have with a full symphonic orchestra and modern recording techniques at his disposal."

Well, it works for me. The score sounds fresh and powerful, and the Moscow Symphony under Stromberg's inspired direction plays up a jungle storm. A 33-page booklet includes cue-by-cue notes, and paeans to Steiner from devotees, including Ray Harryhausen, Ray Bradbury (who co-scripted *MOBY DICK*), and Louise Kloss Steiner Elan, Max Steiner's widow.

Two new and complete forties Warner Bros. scores on Marco Polo are Erich Wolfgang Korngold's fine *DEVOTION* (MP 8 225038), composed for an otherwise questionable biopic about those "strange sisters," the Brontës, and Franz Waxman's *MR. SKEFFINGTON* (MP 8 225037). Both are five-star CDs, of interest to anyone with the slightest concern for Golden Age Hollywood music, but I was especially struck by the lifetime-spanning Bette Davis epic *SKEFFINGTON*, in which the always versatile Waxman exhibits an astounding variety of musical styles while still managing to create a cohesive score featuring solos for electrified solo violin.

Of special interest to foreign film buffs is *THE BERGMAN SUITES: THE CLASSIC FILM MUSIC OF FRIK NORDGREN* (MP 8 223682), which presents excerpts from five early Ingmar Bergman films, 1952 to 1961. Nordgren's music is little known in the USA, but varied and evocative, here unpredictably ranging through an almost horror/suspense mode for *WOMEN'S WAITING* (1952), a lyrical period divertimento for *SMILES FOR A SUMMER NIGHT* (1955), to hypnotic guitars in the Morricone-like "Swindle and Deceit" from *THE FACE* (1958). Adriano, whose fine complete REBECCA

CD was covered in *Scarlet Street* #19, helms the Slovak Radio Symphony for this unusual offering, the latest of the Swiss conductor's recordings of classic European film music, which have proved a welcome companion series to the Stromberg/Morgan discs.

#### Things to Come

In the works from Marco Polo are a horror compilation scheduled for Halloween (*THE UNINVITED*, *THE LODGER*, and *THE BEAST WITH FIVE FINGERS*), the much anticipated Newman/Herrmann *EGYPTIAN* (for a possible late 1999 release), and for the year 2000 an album of Roy Webb scores for Val Lewton classics (including 1942's *CAT PEOPLE* and 1943's *I WALKED WITH A ZOMBIE*), and a new and expanded *THE GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1942). In the talking stages (seemingly *endlessly* in the talking stages) are the scores for thirties Universal horror classics and a complete *ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN* (1948).



*Ross Carr recently assisted in the orchestration and recording (by the City of Prague Philharmonic) of Philippe Blumenthal's score for the new film, GENERAL SUTTER. The film opened at the Locarno Film Festival in August, 1999, and the score was recently released on compact disc in Europe.*



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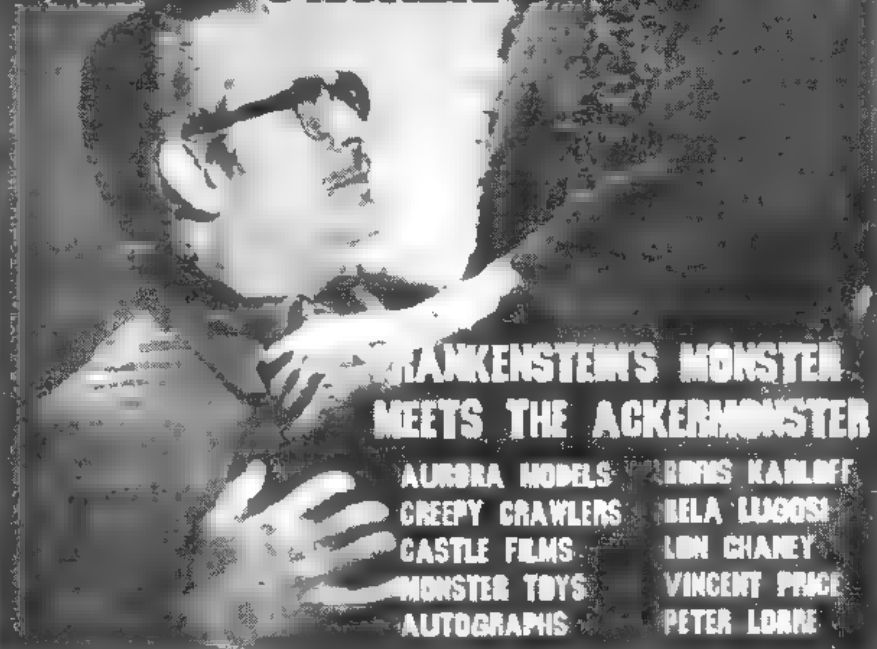
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# Dancin' With The MUMMY

by Ken Hanke

The Mummy's on the loose and he's dancin' with the DVD! Two Mummies, in fact—with a passing nod to the rest of their bandaged brethren—are now to be found spreading various forms of mayhem and mysticism in new incarnations on DVD. First and foremost and the undefeated champion, of course, is Karl Freund's classic from 1932, starring Karloff (the Uncanny) as Im-Ho-Tep, which is here given the same treatment that Universal afforded the DVD presentation of FRANKENSTEIN—with results that are very nearly the equal of the James Whale classic.

The Karl Freund MUMMY is, if not the strangest, then one of the strangest horror films to come from Universal during the Golden Age of the Laemmle regime, a period that started with DRACULA (1931) and ended with DRACULA'S DAUGHTER (1936). It isn't as quirky as the Whale films nor as perverse as Robert Florey's MURDERS IN THE RUE MORGUE (1932) or Edgar G. Ulmer's THE BLACK CAT (1934); its strangeness lies not so much in its storyline as in a peculiarly poetic bent that results from its very deliberate pace and the fact that nearly all of its thrills are suggested rather than shown. (The ancient Egypt flashback



is a notable exception.) In this regard, it is a film more in tune with Tod Browning's DRACULA than with the in-your-face shockers of Whale and Florey that directly preceded it. This is perhaps not too surprising, since DRACULA scripter John Balderston was responsible for the screenplay. The MUMMY is clearly a variation on the DRACULA script—only with most of that film's narrative lapses carefully sidestepped. (More concisely, THE MUMMY may be said to have been DRACULA done "right.")

Whatever the precise reason for the film's more reticent approach—which likely had as much to do with Freund as with Balderston—the results were a film that produced less shocks than shudders. Yet those shudders have worn well over the years—better than many more overt thrillers—and seeing the film in this gorgeous new presentation only makes it just that much more effective. If it isn't quite the revelatory experience that the new FRANKENSTEIN is, it is perhaps only because it isn't as great a film, nor had it suffered the indignities of FRANKENSTEIN's later deletions. The TV prints we became used to never looked quite as shabby as those for FRANKENSTEIN. While the DVD offers no actual restored footage, it nonetheless gives us the film better looking and sounding better than we've ever seen and heard it, and that is no minor thing.

There is no doubt that the recycled music from SWAN LAKE that introduces the film (and also introduced countless horror fans to Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky and classical music) never sounded so good. The significance of this should not be lost on admirers of the classic Universals, since THE MUMMY is the first of those films to utilize a background score. (James Dietrich's uncredited music for THE MUMMY is in fact one of its most effective points.) The DVD showcases its glories wonderfully, especially when it first kicks in with the cut to the Cairo Museum and the display of the discoveries of the tomb of Anck-es-en-Amon. The striking cellos (with that playful and unexpected final chord) give way to the creepy bassoon part before the soundtrack deftly segues into the dance-band tune, "Beautiful Love," and the introduction of the reincarnated princess, Helen Grosvenor (Zita Johann), in a hotel ballroom. Instead of the slightly tinny, thin sound the viewer might be used to from lesser presentations of the film, here we have impressively floor-shaking bass that enhances the music's effectiveness many fold.

But bassoons and cellos are not the only instruments showcased on this soundtrack—there is one other very



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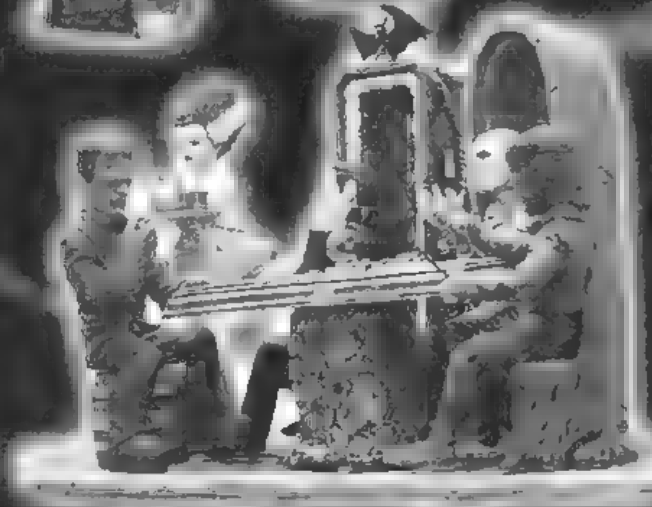


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**PAGE 58 TOP RIGHT:** Being an old-fashioned kind of guy, Im-Ho-Tep believes every girl finds fulfillment only when she becomes a mummy. Boris Karloff and Zita Johann in the original and still champ: *THE MUMMY* (1932). **PAGE 58 BOTTOM LEFT:** Kharis (Lon Chaney Jr.) was the screen's second resuscitated Egyptian. He's pictured here in *THE MUMMY'S GHOST* (1944). **LEFT:** Karloff the Uncanny looks over his script between takes on *THE MUMMY*. **RIGHT:** Brendan Fraser and John Hannah are two intrepid adventurers in the new, not improved, but still quite enjoyable *THE MUMMY* (1999).

significant addition (chronologically, to Universal horrors the speaking voice of Boris Karloff. Since most baby boomer horror fans didn't see these films in the order of original release, it's easy to forget that Karloff had never spoken in a horror lead until *THE MUMMY*. And what a splendidly resonant voice he presents in his beautifully measured delivery of the dialogue, doubtless revelling in the opportunity to speak after the inarticulate characterizations of *FRANKENSTEIN* and *THE OLD DARK HOUSE* (1932). In essence, till you've seen and heard *THE MUMMY* in this version, you ain't seen nor heard nuthin' yet.

Included with the film are a splendid alternate track commentary by occasional *Scarlet Street* contributor Paul M. Jensen (offering perhaps the finest reading of the film to date) and a fine documentary on the film, *MUMMY DEAREST*, produced by David J. Skal, hosted by Rudy Behlmer, and featuring interviews with Jensen, Gregory William Mank, John Balderston's son, Sara Karloff, Rick Baker and others. A great deal of the information contained in the documentary is, of course, not terribly revelatory to the

*Continued on page 63*

**LEFT:** Zita Johann and *MUMMY* director Karl Freund share a friendly meal for the purposes of the publicity camera. In reality, they couldn't stomach one another. **RIGHT:** The 1999 *MUMMY* takes one of its best scenes, in which a member of the archeological party loses his glasses and can't see the title creature clearly enough to know better than to stick around, not from a Universal film but from Hammer's *THE MUMMY'S SHROUD* (1967), pictured here.



© 1967 20th Century Fox



# THE GREAT MUMMY MYSTERY

by Richard Valley

*The swamps of home  
Are brushed with green and gold  
At break of day  
The swamps of home  
Are lovely to behold  
From far away.*

—Marshall Barer, ONCE UPON A MATTRESS

Considering a spot of archeology, are we? Well, the uninitiated and the unbeliever (and sometimes, even, the unwashed) will tell you that the best place to find the mummified remains of the dead of ancient Egypt is in the dry, sun-drenched desert, deep beneath the scorched sands of time. But, don't listen to them. They're crazy.

The moviegoer knows better. Swamp and—the stuff that's always on sale in Florida—that's the place to look. Anyone familiar with the legend of the Princess Ananka and her immortal stud muffin, Kharis, will back me up on this. Whether he's rambling through a rural college town in Massachusetts, shuffling to a Cajun beat in the steamy south of Louisiana, or sauntering down a moonlit lane in Edwardian England, Kharis, his beloved in his arms, always finds time for a little dip in the local muck and mire.

Not for nothing did Hammer Films, when borrowing the essentials of mummy lore for their colorful and in many ways superior variation on the old Universal series, acquire Kharis, Ananka, the Banning family of archeologists, and assorted High Priests of the Temple of Karnak, but also the deed to some soggy real estate. The Studio That Dripped Blood knew a proper mummy setting when they saw one. In 1959, Kharis (Christopher Lee) walked again—straight into a Technicolor bog with Isobel Banning (Yvonne Furneaux), the woman he thought was the reincarnation of his long-dead, lovely Princess.

Happily, Mrs. Banning managed to escape with her lives intact, but we need only turn to Universal's *THE MUMMY'S GHOST* and *THE MUMMY'S CURSE* (both released in 1944) to see how much luckier she was than her predecessors—and to encounter a mystery that is deeper than the deepest tomb in Egypt, if not the deepest swamp in America.

Kharis had arrived in the New World—specifically, Mapleton, Massachusetts—in *THE MUMMY'S TOMB* (1942), and, after bumping off various Bannings and a single Babe, had presumably made an ash of himself when the family manse went up in flames. But he was back a scant two years later in *THE MUMMY'S GHOST*, only

slightly the worse for wear and in lustful pursuit of Amina Mansouri (Ramsay Ames), the college co-ed reincarnation of Ananka. (The author of this article has been unable to find any verification that the film's original title was *RAH! RAH! RAH!*) Despite the best efforts of hero Tom Hervey (Robert Lowery) and the Universal hairdressers and makeup artists, Amina's tresses rapidly blanched and her skin crinkled as she felt herself called back o'er the centuries to take her rightful place alongside Khans—not in Egyptian splendor, needless to say, but in New England ooze.

It was the end of Kharis and Ananka in Massachusetts—but therein lies the mystery, for once again the



Headin' for the swamp: Kharis (Lon Chaney Jr.) carries off Amina Mansouri (Ramsay Ames) in *THE MUMMY'S GHOST* (1944).

toothless twosome rapidly returned, this time in a matter of months, and, instead of bobbing to the surface in Kennedy Land, they clawed their way out of a dried-up marsh in Louisiana! Furthermore, viewers of this latest antediluvian roundelay were told that 25 years had passed since Amina Mansouri had, in a manner of speaking, dropped out of school!

Well, you don't have to be a High Priest to smell a rat. Mummies simply don't sink in Massachusetts and surface in Louisiana! And that's why, in an effort to finally solve this greatest of geographical conundrums, *Scarlet Street* set out to consult several experts in the field of Mummy Movements . . .

In my soul is the beauty  
of the bog

In my memory the magic  
of the mud.

I know that blood is  
thicker than water

But the swamps of home  
Are thicker than blood!

Marshall Barer, ONCE  
UPON A MATTRESS

We first approached Professor Kenneth Hanke of Fort Pierce, Florida, who can run much faster than we imagined. However, after several blocks he quickly tuckered and, wheezing most alarmingly, agreed to answer our question. Opines Professor Hanke:

"The cynical among us—and those of us lacking a scientific bent—may be of the opinion that Universal's screenwriters were merely contemptuous of their audiences with the geographic juggery-pokery that allowed the shift from New England to Louisiana in *THE MUMMY'S CURSE*. 'Look, no one's gonna know the difference, see? You think our audience knows Baton Rouge from Brain tree?' (Indeed, the question arises as to whether or not the writers knew that Louisiana was not one of the New

*Continued on page 62*



**LEFT:** There's nothing like a spoonful of tana for a mummy weary of traveling. Kharis gets a dose from High Priest Ilzor Zandaab (Peter Coe) and acolyte Ragab (Martin Kosleck) in *THE MUMMY'S CURSE* (1944). **RIGHT:** A muck-covered Kharis (Christopher Lee) disposes to Stephen Banning (Felix Aylmer) in Hammer's colorful *THE MUMMY* (1959).

#### THE GREAT MUMMY MYSTERY

*Continued from page 61*

England states) Moving the location afforded extra color and allowed the script to jettison all that 'Ayuh, Pepperidge Farm remembers' northern rustication and exchange it for that wonderful 'Son o' ma gun gonna hab big fun on de bayou' zaniness. While this is, of course, the possible reasoning and justification, I tend to think the move was more scientifically based, and that the relocation was the direct result of Continental Drift. (Despite the name, this is not an Astaire/Rogers dance step.) This concept would also go a long way toward explaining the ambulatory geography of Vasaria/Visaria in the Frankenstein films, which started life as a mountain town and ended up a seaside one—unless, perhaps, both the spelling change and the relocation were a desperate bid for the tourist trade, which undoubtedly suffered a decline in the wake of that little set-to 'twixt the Monster and the Wolf Man."

As Scarlet Readers will instantly perceive, the prof gets right to the meat of the mystery—namely, its duality, its need for two explanations. The first explanation seeks to address the basis for the Universal screenwriters' insouciant lack of continuity (We shall refer to those interested only in this answer as The Seekers of Reason.) The second endeavors to scientifically explain the seemingly inexplicable, since, like those strange, troubled souls who call themselves Sherlockians and actually believe in the existence of a certain Victorian drug addict, there exist Kharisians who insist on the truth, even if scholars have to make it up. (We shall refer to this second group as Horror Fans.)

In his novel *The Return of the Wolf Man* (Berkley Boulevard, 1998), Jeff Rovin sought to appease both factions. Though no mummies appeared in his story, which was intended as the first of a series, Rovin had definite plans for the bandaged set:

"I was going to use Kharis and Im ho-tep in the third novel. The explanation I was toying with was this: that the conditions in the Massachusetts swamp were ideal for preserving the Mummy's remains. Since the Bannings had set up shop in Louisiana, they shifted the mummy to

a similar 'environment' so the remains wouldn't deteriorate further until a proper facility could be completed. Hadn't worked out all the kinks in that notion before I had to bail on the novels, but it would have fit the notion of a field-anthropologist who uses any and all tools that are available to him."

Rovin's theory begs the question of how the Bannings, who rarely could afford passage on a dying camel, managed not only to move south but to cart a couple of crumbling corpses with them. And how could they possibly have done it in secrecy? A possible explanation is provided by our third expert, Drew Sullivan, who bases his suppositions on the unpublished papers of the noted Edinburgh scientist, Professor Oliver Lindenbrook. It is Lindenbrook who posited a series of interconnecting underground tunnels, at least one reaching to the very center of the earth, and it is he who actually attempted a journey to that very epicenter, accompanied by an aging female purveyor of facial cream; a male, semi-nude Norwegian with a gold tooth; a popular singer (later arrested for indecent exposure in a nunnery), and a duck. Claims Sullivan.

'Here at last, sweeties, is the answer to how the Bannings transported the mummies. Simply put, nature took its naughty little underground course! One need only accept Professor Lindenbrook's highly illogical and impractical hypothesis—never a problem for moi—to understand that, when Kharis and Ananka vanished beneath the Massachusetts mud, their bodies entered one of these multitudinous tunnels and traveled on a sea of slime all the way to the Louisiana bayou. Not only that, here's betting that, in doing so, they crossed paths with the Frankenstein Monster and the body of the late Dr. Gustav Neumann, who earlier that year had perished in the quicksands of the mountain village of Visaria, only to be discovered the following year in a cave—or tunnel, shall we say?—bordering the shore of the seaside village of Visaria!"

This is perhaps as close as we will ever come to unraveling the secret of the Great Mummy Mystery, but even this solution leaves some questions unanswered.

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## DANCIN' WITH THE MUMMY

*Continued from page 60*

knowledgeable fan (the narrative naturally has to proceed as if the viewer knows little or nothing), but manages to trace an interesting, informative, and entertaining history of the production (including much background on Nina Wilcox Putnam's original CAGLIOSTRO treatment). More, MUMMY DEAREST does not limit itself to the classic Freund film, but also deftly traces the history of Universal's later and lesser Mummy saga of Kharis in a humorous, but thoroughly affectionate, manner. Such lesser films as *THE MUMMY'S HAND* (1940, in which Kharis is discovered in the Hill of the Seven Jackasses—uh, Jackals), *THE MUMMY'S TOMB* (1942, in which Kharis comes to America and settles in Massachusetts), *THE MUMMY'S GHOST* (1944, in which Kharis goes to college), *THE MUMMY'S CURSE* (1945, in which the big mystery is how a New England bog becomes the Louisiana bayou), and *ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET THE MUMMY* (1955, in which Kharis suffers a name change and the obvious indignities promised by the title) are all duly covered. As a history of the Mummy Universal style, this is the goods. (One hopes the recognition of these later films bodes well for a DVD box set. Hearing Tante Berthe belt out her song in *THE MUMMY'S CURSE* on DVD should be quite something.)

Next to this version of *THE MUMMY*, it is tempting to write off Stephen Sommers' 1999 remake/rethinking of the idea as an overblown exercise in effects work. And to some degree, that's not wrong. Sommers' *MUMMY* is too big for its own good, preposterously overscored by Jerry Goldsmith, and too effects-driven by half, but it's a hard film not to like on its own merits and for its own rather different aims. A beautiful 2.35:1 widescreen transfer with knockout Dolby 5.1 Surround Sound (plain old Dolby Surround on the alternate French language track) helps put over this *MUMMY* for the nineties in the best possible manner. If the viewer can put aside prejudices in favor of the mysticism and poetry of the original (c'mon, purists, you have to do it for the later Universals, too!), what emerges is a fun film. It isn't a great film. It never will be a great film, but it seems unlikely—despite the presumptuous title of the entertaining "making of" documentary that's included, *BUILDING A BETTER MUMMY*—that anyone involved really thought they were out to create timeless art, only an entertaining adventure saga with an horrific base.

Much criticism has been leveled against this new *MUMMY* for its supposed aping of *RAIDERS OF THE*

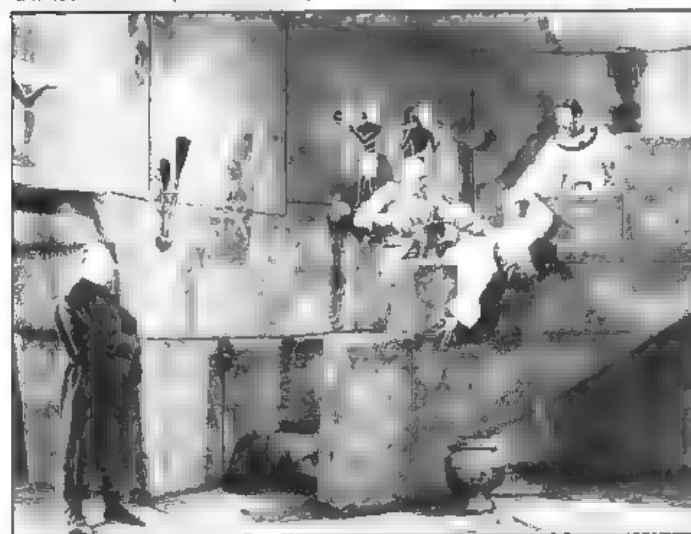
*LOST ARK*, which is not only beside the point, but a bit wide of the mark in reality, since it might be fairer to state that both films share common roots. Ironically, if one examines the film closely, it really has more in common with—and a more proper evocation of the spirit of—the classic adventure sagas (such as 1939's *GUNGA DIN*) than does *RAIDERS*. Brendan Fraser (here proving that his brilliant performance in *GODS AND MONSTERS* was neither a fluke, nor the extent of his considerable range) is much more in the mould of the traditional hero than Harrison Ford's Indiana Jones. Similarly, *THE MUMMY* has much more in common with some of the more outlandish (non-Fu Manchu) novels of Sax Rohmer than anything else—indeed, to such a degree that one wouldn't mind seeing Sommers and company tackle Rohmer's 1924 *Blood of the Witch Queen* (which aspects of *THE MUMMY* actually resemble), a project that clearly call for the types of effects that are simply overused here. For that matter, the comically heroic character played by Bernard Fox—especially in his bit under an umbrella in the desert, listening to a gramophone—might seem more at home in *DR. PHIBES RISES AGAIN* than in any of the works usually cited in connection with the film.

None of this is to say that *THE MUMMY* is not without its connections to the cinematic heritage of the creature. In terms of plot, the film certainly draws upon the Freund film. There are even verbal references to Im-Ho-Tep being "condemned to death not only in this world but in the next," which, of course, is straight out of the original. Karloff's sinister white cat from *THE MUMMY* also reappears, but here as a useful talisman against the Mummy (rather like the Isis medallion in the earlier film). The professor (called Ardath Bey, Im-Ho-Tep's alias in the 1932 film) "accidentally" setting fire to the map that leads to the hidden tomb is directly appropriated from good ol' Professor Andoheb (George Zucco) dropping a vase that serves the same function in *THE MUMMY'S HAND*. There's even a reference to Hammer's *THE MUMMY'S SHROUD* (1967) when a nearsighted man's glasses are smashed, making him easy prey for the shuffling terror. As such, the film has a sense not only of what it is, but where it came from . . .

That this new *MUMMY* doesn't always work is a given. The CGI effect Im-Ho-Tep simply isn't the equal of a flesh and blood actor and doesn't generate much in the way of

*Continued on page 74*

**LEFT:** The saga of Kharis began in Egypt in *THE MUMMY'S HAND* (1940), with George Zucco as Professor Andoheb, Tom Tyler as The Mummy, and Peggy Moran as Marta Solvani, the damsel in distress. **RIGHT:** After a stopover in Massachusetts, Kharis (Lon Chaney Jr.) found himself in the bayou country of Louisiana in *THE MUMMY'S CURSE* (1944), where he pursued the reincarnated Princess Ananka (Virginia Christine) and put a permanent stop to the singing of Tante Berthe (Ann Codee).



STANLEY BERGMAN

# THE MAN BEHIND THE MUMMY

by Rick Atkins

In 1903, in Pueblo, Colorado, on Thursday, August 27, Mark Wenig Bergman was born. Theodore Roosevelt was the nation's 32nd President. Jack London's novel, *Call of the Wild*, was published and plans for the Panama Canal Treaty to be signed by the U.S. were underway. The first silent motion picture, *THE GREAT TRAIL ROBBERY*, was released by the Edison Company.

Two and a half years later, 30-year-old German-born Jewish immigrant and former clothier with the Continental Clothing Company in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, pulled up stakes with his 30-year-old German-born wife and four-year-old daughter, headed for Chicago in search of his own retail business. Instead

of the observation of the Chicago Police Department ("The Mummy") in 1905, he found a new home in the city. He began his career as a retail clerk at the Laen department store (1907), father of the Laen department store (1909), construction company (1912), and later broke into the garment industry (1915). He was a successful businessman and a dedicated family man.



making. Laemmle produced 250 pictures in Universal's first year of business.

Meanwhile, life was going on for young Mark, who would after his barmitzvah be known as Stanley Bergerman. Of the early 1900s, Stanley remembered, "My mother took me to Chicago for summer vacations. The summers there were very hot. I remember how people herded to the lake-front to cool off. There was no air conditioning then, or hydrants for that matter. Water was stored in kegs on wooden carts drawn by horses, and the horses were the first to drink. You were lucky if you were sprayed with water by any firemen in those days. The water had to be pumped manually. I also remember of that time, coming down with a serious bout of pneumonia. They wanted to quarantine me, but my mother insisted on nursing me back to health herself. I missed a whole term of school, but my mother did a splendid job, in her loving care she read to me books, and this is how I acquired my love for books and learning."

The influenza epidemic of 1918 claimed an estimated 20 million people worldwide. For Carl Laemmle, the day of January 12, 1919, would be a day never forgotten. Recha (Stern) Laemmle, Carl's 43-year-old wife, died of pneumonia in New York City. She was survived by her 51-year-old husband, 17-year-old daughter, Rose (known as Rosabelle), and 10-year-old son, Julius (later named Carl Laemmle Jr.).

The Bergermans moved in the 1920s from Colorado to San Diego, California, where Stanley graduated from high school. He would later return to his home state to attend college at the University of Colorado, then went to Chicago for a course in law at the University of Chicago. "I relish my memories as a collegian in Chicago. I made some good friends, many of whom attended Hyde Park High School on Chicago's south side. My buddies and I attended movies regularly. In those days, they were known as shorts or featurettes and some of them bore the Laemmle name. Carl Laemmle's name was very well known in those days. Little did I know then, the involvement we would later have as family."

March 16, 1920 was a significant day for Carl Laemmle and his business associate, Robert H. Cochrane. Laemmle obtained complete ownership of Universal Pictures. His son Julius was eager to learn about the movie business through his father. According to the late actress, Laura LaPlante (from a 1982 interview), "It seemed like every time you'd look for Carl, there would be Junior following him around the lot like a puppy."

Another Universal employee who influenced first the Laemmle family and later Hollywood, as we now know it, was first hired by Laemmle in 1918, at the age of 17. His name was Irving Thalberg.

In the spring of 1920, Thalberg was named the new general manager of Universal Pictures by Carl Laemmle. It was no secret at the time that a courtship had developed between the newly appointed executive and Rosabelle Laemmle. The romance lasted about four years. On the one hand, Thalberg felt pressured into marriage by Rosabelle, while Thalberg's mother forbade it. It has also been said that Laemmle himself, regarding Thalberg's health problems, would possibly make his daughter a young widow.

In 1923, Thalberg resigned his post at Universal to produce films for Louis B. Mayer at MGM. The only promise

that Thalberg made to Laemmle at the time was to finish production on *THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME*, which he kept. No promises were made to Miss Laemmle. Thalberg eventually married in 1927, but it was to Norma Shearer, not Rosabelle. Senior Laemmle's observations rang true. The "boy genius" known as Irving Grant Thalberg died at the age of 36, on September 14, 1936, in Hollywood. Senior and Junior Laemmle were in Europe at the time Rosabelle's grief remained reclusive.

Nepotism was a fixed tradition at Universal City. "Uncle Carl," as he was known, sent for relatives from his native Laupheim, Germany, to come to America and work at Universal. A nephew, Edward Laemmle, son of Carl's brother Joseph, was one of Universal's top movie directors in the roaring twenties. In the fall of 1920, Laemmle wrote to Joseph (who lived in Chicago) with an invitation to live at Universal with his family. (Joseph had immigrated long before Carl. When Carl's departure from Germany came at age 17, it was Joseph he went to for help. Carl was returning a favor.)

Joseph arrived at Universal City in 1921 with his wife, Carrie Belle Norton Laemmle, their 11-year-old daughter, Rebekah Isabelle Laemmle (later known as Carla Laemmle), and Carrie's mother, Mrs. Imogene Norton. Joseph was employed as Carl's lawyer. (He died in Hollywood in 1929.)

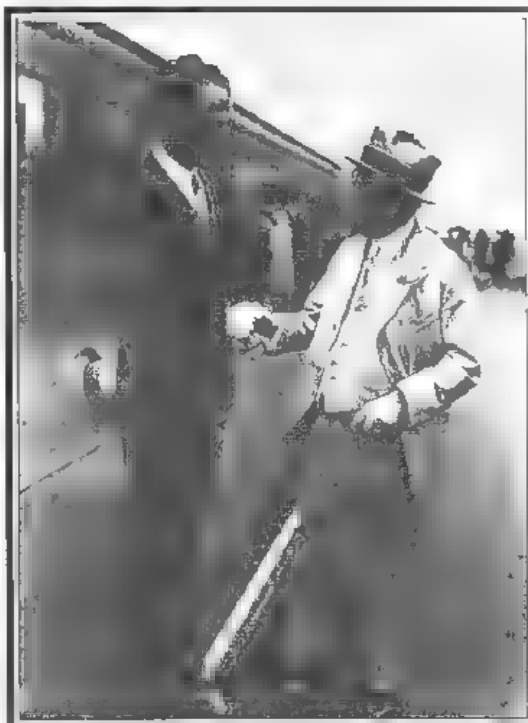
Carla Laemmle said of her uncle, "Uncle Carl was really my uncle. It was not until I arrived in California with my parents and my grandmother from Chicago in 1921 that I learned I had a half brother, Edward Laemmle, who was already an established movie director at the time. My uncle was willing to help anyone in need. He had a heart of gold." (Carla is best remembered as the actress who spoke the opening lines in 1931's *DRACULA*, a film that has achieved, in her words, "a sort of cult following.")

By 1927, life for Stanley Bergerman was promising. His favorite novelist, Louis Bromfield (who later

became his longtime friend), won the Pulitzer Prize for his novel, *Early Autumn*. (Bromfield was also a screenwriter who worked on *DRACULA*. In fact, it was Bergerman's association with Bromfield that led the author to Hollywood.) He had seen *THE JAZZ SINGER*. He was thrilled with the advent of sound motion pictures and moved to Los Angeles, where he was hired by the May Company as a merchandise manager. He also moonlighted on weekends as a waiter at The Coconut Grove. Of his first night on that job, a night that would change his life forever, Stanley recalled:

"I, like any of my other buddies, would like to see the young ladies arrive. I wasn't interested in the stars. I saw many of them come in, and that night I spotted this one young lady walking in briskly with an entourage of men surrounding her. I asked my buddy, who had been working there for awhile, 'Who is that?' My buddy replied, 'That's the daughter of Carl Laemmle of Universal Pictures. Her name is Rosabelle. Would you like to meet her?' I said, 'Meet her? Could I have that table tonight?'" Stanley found the 25-year-old Rosabelle lovable and the two began dating.

Two years later, Rosabelle Laemmle and Stanley Bergerman were wed, on Wednesday, January 2, 1929, at the home of the bride's father (Dias Dorados—or, as it was later known, The Big House) in Benedict Canyon, Beverly Hills, at 6 o'clock in the evening. Dr. Edgar Magnin officiated at



Stanley Bergerman greets father-in-law Carl Laemmle at the LA train station in 1933.



**LEFT:** Horror king Boris Karloff played Im-Ho-Tep in *THE MUMMY* (1932), for which Stanley Bergerman was associate producer. **RIGHT:** Carl Laemmle, Rosabelle and Stanley Bergerman, and Erich Maria Remarque in 1929, shortly after Stanley and Rosabelle were wed.

the nuptials. Rosabelle's brother, Carl Laemmle Jr., was the best man. The groom's mother, Julia D. Bergerman, was also in attendance. The union produced two Bergerman children, Carol Laemmle Bergerman (born September 12, 1930) and Mark Stanley Bergerman Jr. (born September 28, 1932).

In 1929, Stanley Bergerman was appointed production supervisor at Universal Pictures by his father-in-law. Carl Laemmle Jr. was made general manager on April 28, in charge of all productions on his 21st birthday—a position formerly held by Junior's uncle, Julius Bernheim (son of "Papa" Laemmle's sister, Caroline).

Working at Universal was gratifying. Stanley fared well with a number of features between 1930 and 1935, in addition to producing over 100 short subjects and sports documentaries. He is credited in three areas of production: associate producer ("The one who oversees the writing and the

writers and reports to the producer"), executive producer ("The one who raises the money for the picture and does the hiring and/or firing"), and producer ("The one who oversees the entire ball game, and spends the money!").

Bergerman credited his brother-in-law and father-in-law this way: "To have two brilliant, productive individuals in one family, and having given volumes of distinctive films, is indeed a rarity." Junior's first feature-length success came with the film adaptation of the 1929 Erich Maria Remarque novel, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, which won the Best Picture of 1930 award from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. It was during this success that Junior began his much anticipated work on horror pictures. Stanley told this writer in 1979, not long after Junior Laemmle's death, "He did well with the horror pictures, much to his father's disapproval, but Junior thought he

**LEFT:** Carl Laemmle, Charles G. Norris (author of the story *Seed*), and Stanley and Rosabelle Bergerman attend the film version of *SEED* on the West Coast. **RIGHT:** For 1935's *WEREWOLF OF LONDON* (with Henry Hull), Stanley Bergerman acted as executive producer.



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knew what his public wanted and he proved right and was the first to make it a form of art in sound pictures."

Stanley Bergerman is credited with two of the Universal horror classics, *THE MUMMY* (1932, as associate producer) and *THE WEREWOLF OF LONDON* (1935, as executive producer). On his association with *THE MUMMY*:

"When we refer to pictures we worked on, we call them *our* pictures, and *THE MUMMY* was one of my pictures. My job was that of executive producer. I saw that the actors were comfortable both with their lines and on the set. This kept production running as smoothly as possible. It was more of a logistical job. Boris Karloff was always kind and Zita Johann was a delightful human being. I am proud to have worked with Junior on *THE MUMMY*."

Of *WEREWOLF*, Bergerman recalled, "I read the story of the Tibetan werewolf [originally titled *THE UNHOLY HOUR*] to Carl Laemmle. I said, 'Wouldn't that be a good one for Junior?'"

It was agreed that, since Junior was busy making *SHOW BOAT* (1936, and Junior's swan-song) with director James Whale, Stanley Bergerman would be the executive producer for *WEREWOLF OF LONDON*. As it transpired, this would be his last job for the studio.

Stanley Bergerman resigned his post at Universal in 1935. Rumors were circulating that Carl Laemmle might sell the studio. Laemmle's main concern was the war effort. Both he and his son-in-law became a team in the Jewish Relief Effort, in which Laemmle signed, between November 1936 and May 1939, some 200 or more affidavits making it possible for German-born Jews to flee Europe to live in America. According to Dr. Udo Bayer, curator of the Carl Laemmle Museum in Laupheim, Germany, "There may have been more affidavits signed by Carl Laemmle, but due to gaps in the stored material in the National Archives in Washington, we are not sure."

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Universal Pictures Corporation was sold on March 15, 1936 for \$5,500,000 to Standard Capital Company banker, J. Cheever Cowdin. Under the new regime, Carl Laemmle lost his presidency to Robert Cochrane. The new production heads were sales manager James R. Grainger and his son Edmund. Charles R. Rogers of Paramount Pictures became the new production manager. Junior Laemmle was thought likely to stay on at Universal, but resigned one month after the sale. Senior Laemmle humbly retired to his Beverly Hills home (that he purchased in 1927 from film actor, where he spent more time with his beloved grandchildren and the war relief effort).

Death came to Carl Laemmle on the morning of September 24, 1939, at age 72. The following morning his body lay in state at B'nai B'rith Temple for two hours before the one-hour service held at the Wilshire Boulevard Temple. For two minutes at other movie studios in Hollywood observed silence as requested by the Will Hays office. Rabbi Edgar F. Magnin eulogized him as "the little man . . . who was a big man."

Looking back, Stanley Bergerman once wrote. "I am deeply grateful that Carl Laemmle said 'yes' and became my father-in-law. I was privileged to have married his daughter, the delightful Rosabelle. Carl Laemmle's virtues were many. Here are a few. He was a courageous, progressive, and adventurous leader and pioneer in the motion picture industry, founder and president of Universal. Uncle Carl, as most all of us called him, held out a helping hand not only to friends and family, but to strangers and newcomers seeking a break and a chance to enter pictures. His open door brought professional hope to discouraged people worn out by casting offices and unimaginative producers and directors. He discovered many stars, directors,

*Continued on page 72*

# Book Ends

## The Scarlet Street Review of Books

### MICHAEL RIPPER UNMASKED

Derek Pykett

Midnight Marquee Press, 1999

224 pages—\$20.00

When one thinks of Hammer films, images of rich color, lush Victorian sets, and runaway carriages spring readily to mind. But for my money, it was the actors who made Hammer films what they were, particularly during the studio's heyday of the fifties and sixties. Whether the scripts were good, bad, or just plain ugly, one could always count on a level of acting that transcended the material with a startling genuineness. Think of Hammer actors, and two names come to the fore: Peter Cushing and Christopher Lee. But think just a bit harder and a third will emerge, a supporting player who turned up in seemingly every movie the studio produced, and who became a veritable poster boy for Hammer: Michael Ripper. (Ripper appeared in 35 Hammer productions—more than any other actor, including Cushing and Lee.)

For *Michael Ripper Unmasked*, author Derek Pykett did his homework and collected an impressive array of interviewees for pertinent reminiscences, and included plenty of quotes from the man himself. "What Michael has been able to remember about Hammer and the rest of his career, as well as his private life," writes Pykett, "has been put into this biography." Unfortunately, this turns out to be somewhat limited and often rather vague for, "due to memory problems, Michael is unable to recall many of the things that

have happened during his life and career." Pykett has tried to piece things together from the memories of family, friends, and colleagues, but it makes for a rather slim body of work (unlike Ripper's career). One can only wish that Pykett had gotten to the man sooner, when his memory was more intact.

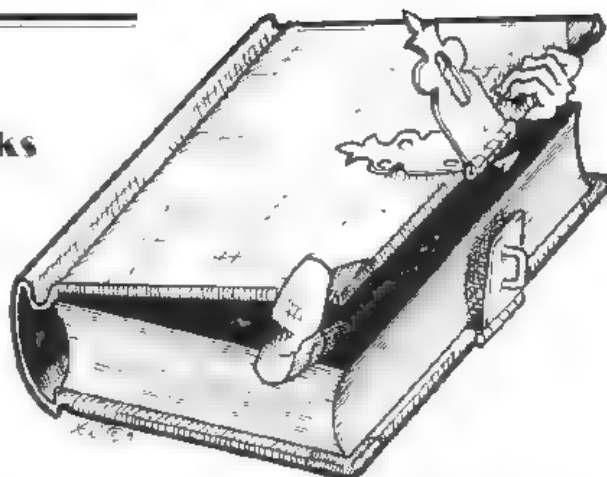
Even so, by book's end one gets a warm impression of Michael Ripper as a gentle, modest, caring professional—and truly a nice guy. In that respect, the book succeeds in painting a lovely portrait of an excellent actor.

There's no denying the immense respect and admiration Pykett holds for Michael Ripper. This is fine, but one soon comes to feel that the author considers himself Michael's guardian, there to protect the actor's good name from all and sundry. This tends to limit the book somewhat, as it's obvious the author would never include anything that might cast a less-than-flattering light on the subject. (Pykett barely even mentions Michael's two divorces, for instance, though he does—with apologies—briefly explore the abuse Michael suffered at his father's hand and its effect on the actor.) This is not to say that a good bio needs to dig deep for dirt, but the best biographies possess a balance that makes the subject come to vivid life by showing him or her to be a real human being.

Pykett seems to have let his reverence sap a little of his sense of humor as well, for the book is much too serious in tone, making it seem a biography of a Pope rather than of an English character actor. A bit lacking is any real sense of drama—surprising, considering the author is an actor himself.

On the plus side, the book is filled with an excellent selection of never-before-seen photos (topped by an evocative and gorgeous cover) and an exhaustive filmography (as well as complete theater and television appearance listings). Of course, so many photographs and a 34-page filmography (15 percent of the book's total length) underlines the actual brevity of the text. It also features that bane of all serious film enthusiasts: no index. Ouch!

Since it's likely that Mr. Ripper will never be the subject of another book, this flawed but heartfelt work will have to stand alone. Though *Michael Ripper Unmasked* is definitely a must for any Hammer fan, its



appeal for the more general cinema buff remains limited.

—Bryan Senn

### THE STOP-MOTION FILMOGRAPHY

Neil Pettigrew

McFarland & Co., 1999

Box 611, Jefferson, NC 28640

838 pages—\$110

While much has been written about the technical aspects of model animation, only the most prominent examples of the art have been considered worthy of detailed criticism. In this staggeringly comprehensive study, Neil Pettigrew provides shot-by-shot analysis of every stop-motion sequence in every known feature film that uses the process, uncovering the flashes of brilliance hidden in such notorious duds as *THE DAY THE EARTH ENDED* (1980), *HOWARD THE DUCK* (1986), and *HOUSE II* (1987).

The author assigns each film a pair of one-to-four star ratings, one for the quality of the animation and the other for the film as a whole. Though Pettigrew brings a fan's enthusiasm to this study, he never allows his sense of wonder to blunt his critical acumen. *KING KONG* (1933), which receives 18 pages of coverage, is the only film granted a double four-star rating.

In addition to an introductory history of dimensional animation, the book includes two 16-page color inserts, a glossary, filmographies organized by animator, lists of animators' favorite scenes, and a stop-motion memorabilia price guide. The only missing feature is a chronological list of films.

Pettigrew gives long overdue attention to the work of such Eastern Bloc filmmakers as Alexander Ptushko and Karel Zeman, whose magical fantasies influenced Terry Gilliam. However, puppet films, which do not involve live-action footage, such as Michael Myerberg's *HANSEL AND GRETEL* (1954) and Jiri Tinka's *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM* (1959) are not covered. This results in a more pessimistic evaluation of stop-motion cinema, as such works count among the few features in which the animators are involved in the overall conception of the film.

Pettigrew's thoroughness and accuracy border on the astounding, merely watching almost 300 stop-motion features con-

### Harry Spalding (Ray Barrett) and Tom Bailey (Michael Ripper) uncover a victim of THE REPTILE (1966).







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stitutes a heroic exertion in itself. How many of us could survive a double feature of *A NYMPHOID BARBARIAN IN DINOSAUR HELL* (1991) and *PREHYSTERIA! 2* (1994) with all our faculties intact?

While some recent McFarland filmographies have been marred by typographical errors, omissions, and factual inaccuracies, *The Stop-Motion Filmography* is a work of impeccable scholarship, and merits a place in any serious film library.

—Michael Draine

## A CRITICAL HISTORY OF TELEVISION'S THE TWILIGHT ZONE

Don Presnell and Marty McGee  
McFarland and Co., 1998

282 pages—\$39.95

Quickly now, who was the only woman to direct a *TWILIGHT ZONE* episode? How many TZ episodes starred Burgess Meredith? How many did Rod Serling actually write? In what year did *THE TWILIGHT ZONE* lose a word in its title and gain a half hour of air time?

*A Critical History* . . . is not merely a treasury of such TV trivia, enough to create your own game, but it is also a treasure of a book for those who remain fascinated by this seminal series, and even for those who merely have a vaguely sweet or fearful memory of a few episodes. It is obvious that, for Presnell and McGee, this definitive work has been a labor of love. It is their contention that *THE TWILIGHT ZONE* . . . is the best television series that has ever been aired." While there are surely some other contenders for that title, it is a fact that, after all its imitators, including its eighties namesake, have come and gone, TZ remains inimitable, a still relevant part of our cultural landscape.

The authors have many explanations for *THE TWILIGHT ZONE*'s continued popularity, the two most important being the writing, which was literate, sharp, and involving, and the series' universality of theme. Almost every episode concerns an Everyman (or woman) thrust into the realm of the extraordinary. Rod Serling was, above all, a master story

teller who knew how to take his audience to "a wondrous land whose boundaries are that of imagination."

As a source book, *A Critical History of Television's The Twilight Zone* (a typically unweildy McFarland title) is endlessly usable, its preface even doubling as a reading list for those who want more. There are eight appendices, including one that's sure to be a favorite, entitled "Close But No Zone: Stories Never Filmed." The meat of the book is "The Episodes," divided into seasonal chapters. Each show begins with its original airdates, writer, source, and complete technical and acting credits, including some that did not make it on the air. There is a synopsis and a section called "Notes and Commentary," which discusses the source material and critiques the production.

In this eminently readable work, there is perhaps only one poor decision. In the "Writer Biographies" appendix, right after Serling, there is a bio of Buck Houghton. While Mr. Houghton produced all 102 episodes of the series' first three seasons, and his creative input was enormous, he does not belong in a writers' list. It is understandable that the authors wanted to give some space to the man who, "aside from Serling, was the most important creative force" behind the show. Perhaps he could have headed a list in which producing, music, and cinematography got their due. And perhaps the prospect of a ninth appendix was too much for even the doughty Presnell and McGee to contemplate.

Ken Schachtman



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A highlight of Ray's television career was starring opposite Ida Lupino in the "That Woman" episode of 4-STAR PLAYHOUSE.

## RAY STRICKLYN

*Continued from page 28*

no career to begin with, having been away so long. I just wanted to act and they were the best roles offered me. But they changed everything and gave me a new career as a character actor.

**SS:** What led you to do a one-man show as Tennessee Williams?

**RS:** Well, I was doing a play of his, *VIVIAN*, which is one of his last works. The character I played in it was Mr. Nightingale, and he was really Tennessee writing about himself. Some of the Los Angeles critics commented on what an interesting Williams I would make af-

ter seeing that performance and that's where the idea originated. At first, people started saying I should do something. But I never got around to it, and then Tennessee died. Well, Milton Goldman wanted to do something to honor Tennessee, so he commissioned a bust to put in the courtyard of his theater. Then he came to me and said, "When the bust is ready, would you put together your evening for the unveiling?" So I thought, "Well, I'll have 15 minutes of me as Tennessee and get other actors to do scenes from his plays," but as I started researching material, my part kept getting bigger until it turned out to be strictly me doing it. It turned out to be an hour in length at first, and then it got longer and I wound up doing for eight years what started out to be just a weekend event! (Laughs) It was so tremendously successful, but it was all a total fluke and certainly not expected to have a life.

**SS:** Had you ever played in any other Williams plays?

**RS:** I did *CAMINO REAL* in 1973, as Lord Byron. I thought I was pretty bad in it—but it's interesting, in retrospect, that I stopped acting after that and then, 12 years later, I returned to acting as Tennessee! So he stopped my career and started it again!

**SS:** And as you said, you were a publicist in the interim.

**RS:** Yes, for 12 years. We handled Bette Davis, Henry Fonda, and the Burtons and lots of top stars. It was interesting work, but I missed acting terribly.

**SS:** Would you consider your one-man show as Tennessee Williams the highlight of your career?

**RS:** Yes. I think that's certainly the best thing I ever did. It's funny about Tennes-

see—the very first time I met him was when I went to read at a producer's apartment and Tennessee happened to be there. It was a play that the Theatre Guild was going to do, the story of an older woman infatuated with this youth, and the producer asked Tennessee if he would read the woman's part! (Laughs) So he graciously consented and we played our first love scene. I've always said Tennessee Williams was my first leading lady.

**SS:** Do you think Hollywood is changing its attitude toward gay people, both as characters in a film and as out actors?

**RS:** Well, I like to think attitudes are changing. I think it's a little early yet to really make a judgment. Certainly the subject is more prominently featured on television and in films, but the actors who have come out are pretty well established in their careers. I don't know that it would be advantageous for someone new and just starting out. In fact, it might be a detriment—still, unfortunately. But Rupert Everett, Ian McKellen, Anne Heche—these are people who are all doing really well. In the case of someone like Ian McKellen, who is such a great actor, I don't think it would matter. He's like John Gielgud.



**SS:** What do you think of the assumption that a gay actor can't be believable in a heterosexual love scene?

**RS:** Oh, that's ridiculous! I watched Anne Heche just the other night in a film and she was fabulous. There were explicit sex scenes and they were very believable. Of course, she did end up with a girl! (Laughs)

**SS:** You mentioned starting your autobiography as therapy after learning that you were in poor health with emphysema. How is your health now?

**RS:** I have good days and bad. Unfortunately, I'm still smoking, which is the worst thing I can be doing. It's very exhausting, not being able to breathe properly, and it's certainly curtailed some of my work. I was offered a role in a new, low-budget film, but I don't think I'll be able to accept it. Not that it'd change my life in any way, but it's on location and I

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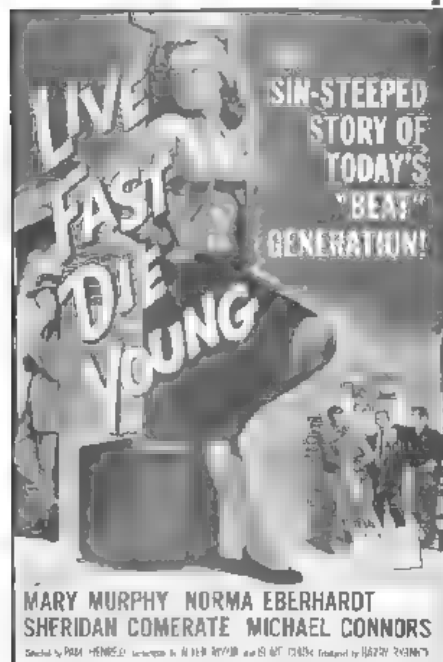
just don't feel comfortable traveling too far from home these days. I'd work if it's something local. Earlier this year I finished a four-month stint on *DAYS OF OUR LIVES*, but that got to be difficult too. I suppose, if it was a really great part, I would attempt it.

**SS:** Well, in the meantime, congratulations on writing a truly fascinating book.

**RS:** Well, thank you. I've been getting a lot of fan mail from people I haven't seen in 40 years, and a lot of strangers, too, who have been most kind. But the two that caught my interest are really something. The first was from a young man who, after he read the book, joined AA, which I think is just such a wonderful thing to happen.

**SS:** And the second?

**RS:** The second was from a young man who, after he read the book, quit acting! (Laughs)



## NORMA EBERHARDT

*Continued from page 53*

London in 1958. Do you remember an interview you gave to the press then? It's very funny. Well, my husband had been doing a play, and I was giving out interviews left and right because *RETURN OF DRACULA* had just opened in Piccadilly. And I told the British press what a thrill it was to walk down Piccadilly and look up and see my head hanging down being strangled. They had a giant cutout of me with long hair—I never had long hair, but they drew a long head of hair on me that I never had—and I was leaning backwards, and Francis was leaning over my neck like he was going to chew it up. That was pretty exciting for me. Not that I'm not excited by going to Wax World or seeing the garden in Buckingham Palace and the Albert Museum—the paintings are exquisite—but really, the biggest thrill was to walk down Piccadilly and see myself being strangled!

## SCREEN AND SCREEN AGAIN

*Continued from page 29*

ventures to feature one of the greatest pulp characters ever created. Hero of 181 novels by "Kenneth Robeson" (Lester Dent) and publicly acknowledged as the source for Jerry Siegel and Joseph Shuster's Superman, Clark "Doc" Savage Jr. was coming to the big screen via the man behind such classic films as *WAR OF THE WORLDS* (1953) and *THE SEVEN FACES OF DR. LAO* (1964), George Pal.

Mike Fenton and Jane Feinberg lined up a perfect cast with six-foot-four TV Tarzan Ron Ely as the man of bronze. Doc's sidekicks, the Fabulous Five, were also extremely well chosen. Edson Quick played geologist/archeologist William ("Johnny") Harper Littlejohn, Paul Gleason was electrician expert Ma or Thomas ("Long Tom") J. Roberts, Darrell Zwerling played lawyer Brigadier General Theodore ("Ham") Marley Brooks, William Lucking was construction engineer Colonel John ("Renny") Renwick, and Mike Miller was cast as the scene-stealing chemist Lieutenant Colonel Andrew ("Monk") Blodgett Mayfair. Production went so well and Pal was so excited about the franchise that he announced two sequels already in the works (*DOC SAVAGE: ARCH ENEMY OF EVIL* and *DOC SAVAGE IN ATLANTIS COUNTRY*) before *MAN OF BRONZE* was even screened. Unfortunately, Warner Bros. executives, test screenings, and critical reaction made this not only the first and last entry in the series, but George Pal's final film as well.

While studying, meditating, and creating things that "one day might be useful to mankind" at his Arctic Fortress of Solitude, Doc senses something is wrong and rushes back to his New York headquarters. There, the Fabulous Five tells him of the death of his father in the village of Hidalgo in Central America, and the arrival of a package that his father must have sent the day he died. After an attempted assassination and a successful arson attack that destroys his father's package, Doc deduces that his father was murdered. Doc and company head for Hidalgo. They discover that Doc's father was given the deed to the mysterious land Quetzamal that lies "over the edge of the world."

It is here that our heroes meet our villain, the very unthreatening and cartoonish Captain Seas (Paul Wexler), who only wants Doc dead so he can enslave the villagers and exploit their fabulous pool of gold.

Perhaps the Warner Brothers executives and fans thought *DOC SAVAGE* was going to be a straightforward action/adventure film à la the James Bond franchise. What they got was high camp. The film features a hero whose shirt gets shredded at the slightest provocation and such wonderfully outrageous devices as extinguisher globes, laser lighters, and my favorite: refractive glass! (It makes everything appear to be five inches to the left



Ron Ely as Doc Savage

of its actual location—quite useful in avoiding snipers.) The ending seems to belong in an AIP beach party movie. Warners immediately pulled the movie from its planned national release and opened it in limited areas, before sending it to near oblivion on television. Thanks to its rescuing financial thud, George Pal was not able to make another movie before his untimely death in 1980.

Looking at *DOC SAVAGE* today, I was pleasantly surprised to find a really fun, if not particularly inspired, film. It was a good first-in-a-series movie. A great portion of *MAN OF BRONZE* concerns setting things up: character relations, locations, gadgets, and vehicles. Michael Anderson's direction is extremely dull (considering the possibilities), and the script could have used a little help, particularly in building up Captain Seas, but all these things could have been fixed in sequels. The plusses include a wonderful Frank De Vol score that incorporates John Philip Sousa's marches, a great performance by Ely, and appearances by genre faves Michael (THE HILLS HAVE EYES) Berryman and Pamela (BUCK ROGERS) Hensley.

Warner Home Video has brought *DOC SAVAGE* to laserdisc in a completely no frills widescreen (approximately 1.85:1) edition. The side break is abrupt and would have better been placed immediately after the escape from Captain Seas' yacht. The source print is slightly faded and sporadically shows slight speckling, but is an improvement over the old VHS print. The mono soundtrack is serviceable but unexceptional. Hopefully, with the recent announcement of a new Doc Savage movie starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, interest in this film will rise and a completely remastered DVD with trailer, commentary, and Doc Savage history will be forthcoming. What do you say, Warner Home Video?

Jeff Allen



**LEFT:** The annual meeting of the Los Angeles Breakfast Club in 1931. Seated from left to right are Orra S. Montette, Carl Laemmle, Rosabelle Laemmle, Stanley Bergerman, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Laemmle, and Carla Laemmle. In the foreground: brothers Lester and Tom H. Weber. Lester was the event's toastmaster and Tom the leader of the orchestra. **RIGHT:** Karl Freund sets up the shot of Im-Ho-Tep (Boris Karloff) stealing the sacred Scroll of Thoth in *THE MUMMY* (1932).

## STANLEY BERGERMAN

*Continued from page 67*

ducers and directors. He discovered many stars, directors, and producers, including Irving Thalberg. Universal underwent vicissitudes in its long trek to becoming 'a major,' sometimes involving personal crisis. None were too big or too tough for this five foot, two inch giant from Laupheim, Germany. I have watched Uncle Carl at the helm of Universal, fixing grim problems with unfailing courage, precision, and sharp judgement. Carl Laemmle guided good old U through the shoals to defy conspirators and predators.

"Another star producer from Universal was Carl Laemmle Jr., who brought to the screen such notable pictures as *ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT*, *BACK STREET*, *DRACULA*, *FRANKENSTEIN*, and *STRICTLY DISHONORABLE*. Bless Carl Laemmle—I loved this man."

In 1941, Stanley established himself as both a literary and a talent agent, representing artists in the entertainment field. (Among the talent clients were Rudy Vallee and Alan Ladd.) One year later, Junior Laemmle was inducted into the army. At war's end, Junior received an honorable discharge and Rosabelle was there to bring him home. Junior's longtime friend, Evelyn Moriarty, remembered, "The Savoy Hotel had a room for him when he returned from the army, but he chose The Plaza to live, until he lived at George Cukor's house, while the Tower Grove house was being built." Junior was not reclusive until he became disabled. He loved the racetrack, the fights, dining out, entertaining, and baseball. He was a friend to Babe Ruth. Junior Laemmle never went back to the movie business, though. Moriarty recalled Junior (who was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 1958) saying to her, "I'm yesterday's mashed potatoes." (In 1962 Junior's modern, one-level home on Tower Grove Drive, patterned after one of Cukor's three houses, in Beverly Hills and with a swimming pool and panoramic view of Benedict Canyon, was completed. This would be Junior's permanent residence.)

By 1950, Stanley Bergerman had left the entertainment field and turned to commercial real estate. Focusing on Hollywood, his new title as broker and investor kept him busy for over 40 years.

Stanley and Rosabelle became proud grandparents on January 11, 1960, when Laura Lee Bergerman was born to



Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Bergerman, Jr. Later that year, Stanley and Rosabelle moved from their Beverly Hills home to a Westwood condominium, which would be the Bergerman's permanent place of residence. They loved art and traveled often. Said Carla Laemmle: "They also loved the theater, and Rosabelle had a great love for classical music. I, too, love the symphony and Rosabelle and Stanley, the charming people that they were, invited me there on many occasions. Rosabelle was quite the entertainer. She planned most of my uncle's big parties. She was a dear hostess and a charming person and I know that Stanley adored her."

Death came to 63-year-old Rosabelle Laemmle Bergerman on Saturday, November 16, 1965. "I drew closer to Junior after Rosabelle's death," Stanley recalled. "I'd bring him out to the club [Brentwood Country Club] for tennis, and when he became disabled I visited him quite regularly. He was a soup lover, and he said to me that he remembered his mother's soup and how good it was. He thought Brentwood had that fine a soup, so I'd bring him soup every Saturday, for many years. He was my friend and my brother. We both had a love for art." (Junior would survive Rosabelle by nearly 14 years. His death came exactly 40 years to the day of his father's.)

Stanley remarried on September 1, 1967, to Fay Schiller. The two had met in 1966 at the Brentwood Country Club during a round of tennis and enjoyed a lovely rapport. In 1984, Stanley was diagnosed with throat cancer and underwent an operation to remove the growth. The operation was a success, but in 1996 the cancer returned. Stanley showed progress in treatment until pneumonia occurred in the summer of 1998, when he asked to go home from the hospital. The doctors agreed to release him and nurses were assigned to take care of him around the clock.

Mark Stanley Bergerman died on Monday, July 13, 1998, at his Westwood home. His wife was at his bedside. He was laid to rest in a crypt at Hillside Memorial Park, in Los Angeles. Stanley was preceded in death by his only

*Continued on page 74*



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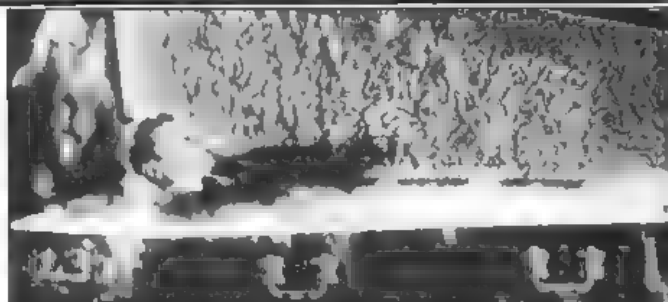
## THE RETURN OF DRACULA

Continued from page 43

MICIDAL, 1965's THE GHOST AND MR. CHICKEN, and 1968's ROSEMARY'S BABY—the latter most appropriately, since, in RETURN's Halloween party sequence, Cornelia is all dolled up as a witch!

THE RETURN OF DRACULA has never received its full share of credit. Entries in film books are either riddled with errors (John L. Flynn's 1992 *Cinematic Vampires*, for instance, which, despite the film's title, insists that Lederer plays Count Belloc, that the character "sets up shop in a small boardinghouse," and that the actor played vampires in several later films) or dismissive (Leonard Maltin's annual *Movie and Video Guide* gives RETURN a paltry two stars, accompanied by the claim "Lederer thwarted by mediocre script." Rarely is an intelligent reading found, though Phil Hardy's 1986 *Encyclopedia of Horror Movies* states "It's an intelligent conception for a B movie, and distinctly above average in execution."

Retitled CURSE OF DRACULA for television screenings, THE RETURN OF DRACULA, along with the majority of United Artists' fifties sci-fi and horror outings, is seldom rerun on the tube these days, but for anyone seeking it out on video or laserdisc, its many virtues will prove entertaining and rewarding. It remains one of the minor gems of the horror film.



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**LEFT:** Another Mummy Mystery: Wallace Ford played Babe Jensen in *THE MUMMY'S HAND* (1940), but when he turned up "many years later" to be bumped off by Kharis in *THE MUMMY'S TOMB* (1942), he was Babe Hanson! Of course, it's been rumored for decades that the original Babe Jensen was hiding out in his new identity—as Tante Berthe! **RIGHT:** Famed socialite Mame Dennis shields nephew Patrick Dennis from the anger of banker (and mummy screenwriter?) Dwight Babcock in the film version of her life story, *AUNTIE MAME* (1958). Pictured: Rosalind Russell as Mame, Jan Handzlik as Patrick, and Fred Clarke as the enigmatic Mr. Babcock.

## THE GREAT MUMMY MYSTERY

*Continued from page 62*

First and foremost, of course, is when Universal Pictures will make the Mummy Mud Ride the latest attraction at its theme park. But more momentous by far is the question of how, once Kharis and Ananka were safely relocated, the penniless Bannings hoped to finance their studies. To answer this last riddle, we must turn to the credits of *THE MUMMY'S CURSE*, where we find listed as creator of the original story one Dwight Babcock. Does the name sound faintly familiar? It should, because as every follower of early 20th-century society knows, Dwight Babcock was an officer of the Knickerbocker Bank, a firm fully capable of funding scientific research, and a reluctant acquaintance of that world traveler and frequent caller at the ancient doorways of Egypt, Mame Dennis Burnside, a woman who without doubt would have found interesting things to do with tana leaves.

## DANCIN' WITH THE MUMMY

*Continued from page 63*

real chills because it's so very obviously an effect. The film is overlong and overdone. Opening with the history of Im Hotep, as opposed to placing it within the body of the film as an explanatory flashback, is clearly a mistake in a film that needs a more dynamic beginning than this provides. All these things to one side, though, *THE MUMMY* really is a lot of fun and Fraser's cockeyed heroics ("This just keeps getting better and better," he sarcastically comments as everything but the ILM kitchen sink is thrown at him in the climax) make it all worthwhile. It is simply the most gracefully comedic heroic performance since the heyday of Cary Grant—and that's no small compliment. Any actor these days who can pull off a climactic kiss on camelback is a rare find and bears watching.

The DVD offers a plethora of extras, including screen savers; various accoutrements for those with DVD computers, the documentary; an audio commentary by Sommers and the film's editor, Bob Ducsay, a couple of deleted scenes, trailers for the film, and a couple of other trailers (one for a Kevin Costner picture that was more than I hope to ever see of the film in question again). As the ultimate representation of the film, as well as a nifty collection of cinematic souvenirs, it would be hard to ask for more.

## THE MOST OF FRANKENSTEIN

*Continued from page 32*

One peculiar point about both the documentary and the audio commentary is the apparently conscious decision to play down James Whale's homosexuality and the possible reading of the film in that context—a move that may seem like playing to the crowd. I suppose I was expecting a reading of the film in Rudy Behlmer's audio commentary (which has a minor glitch towards the end of the film, so that part of it is delivered twice) and was a little letdown when, instead, I mostly found a running production history with only occasional comments on the film itself. Nonetheless, the commentary is certainly worth having, as it does catalogue aspects of the film that may not be common knowledge even to many diehard Universal scholars. All that to one side: what really matters here is the definitive release of one of the truly great films in a manner that it richly deserves. This is indeed the end-all be-all FRANKENSTEIN, the most exciting thing to happen to a Universal horror fan since first encountering the film late at night on a SHOCK THEATER, and the perfect excuse—even if it's not in Dolby 5.1 Surround Sound—to break down and buy that DVD player at last.

## STANLEY BERGERMAN

*Continued from page 72*

granddaughter, Laura Lee Bergerman (who died tragically in a 1978 car accident), and his daughter, Carole Bergerman (who died on November 28, 1994). He was survived by Fay Schiller, two stepdaughters, five grandchildren, and his only son, Mark Stanley Bergerman Jr.

Stanley was known throughout his 94 years for his charitable fund-raising. He aided the United Way, the American Red Cross, the Jewish Home for the Aging, the Los Angeles chapter of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the Motion Picture and Television Fund (for which Carl Laemmle was once president), and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

In fond remembrance of my friend, Stanley Bergerman, the following words were written in the local obituary of the *Los Angeles Times*, fitting words for a noble man to many— "A man of wit, charm, elegance, and grace . . ."

Bless Stanley Bergerman—I loved this man. Shalom.

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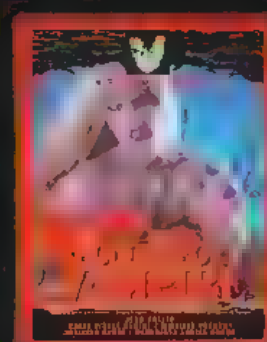
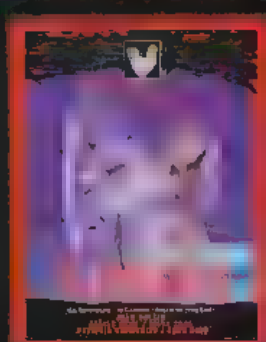


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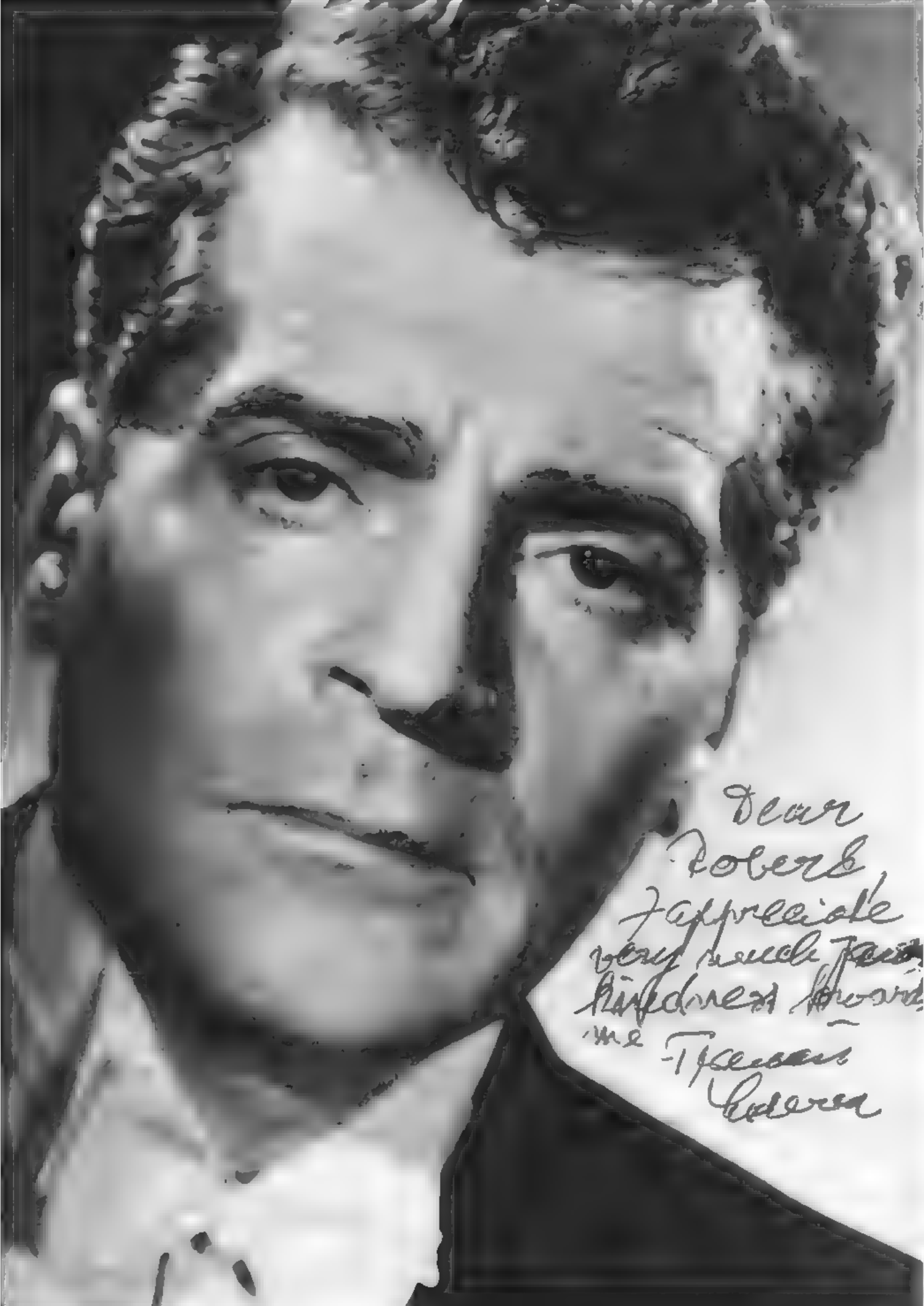












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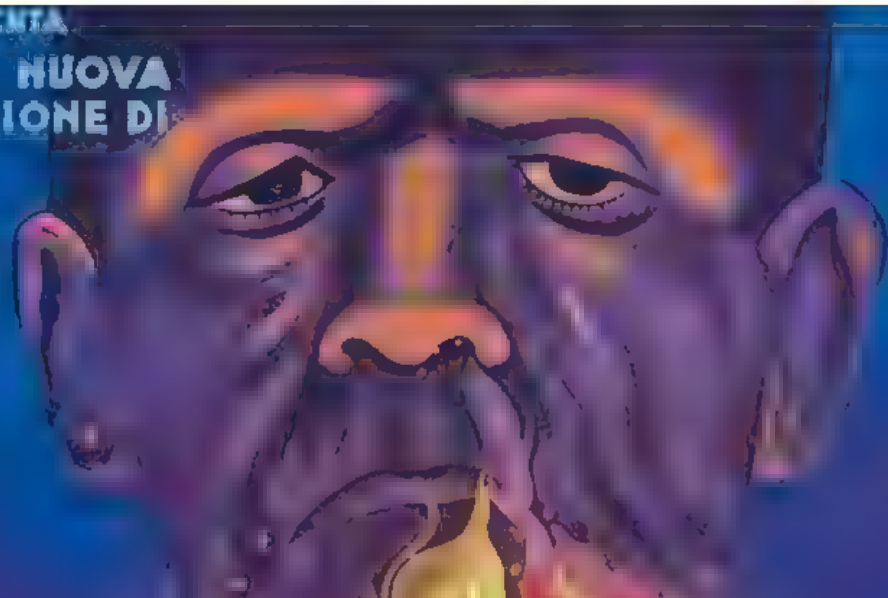


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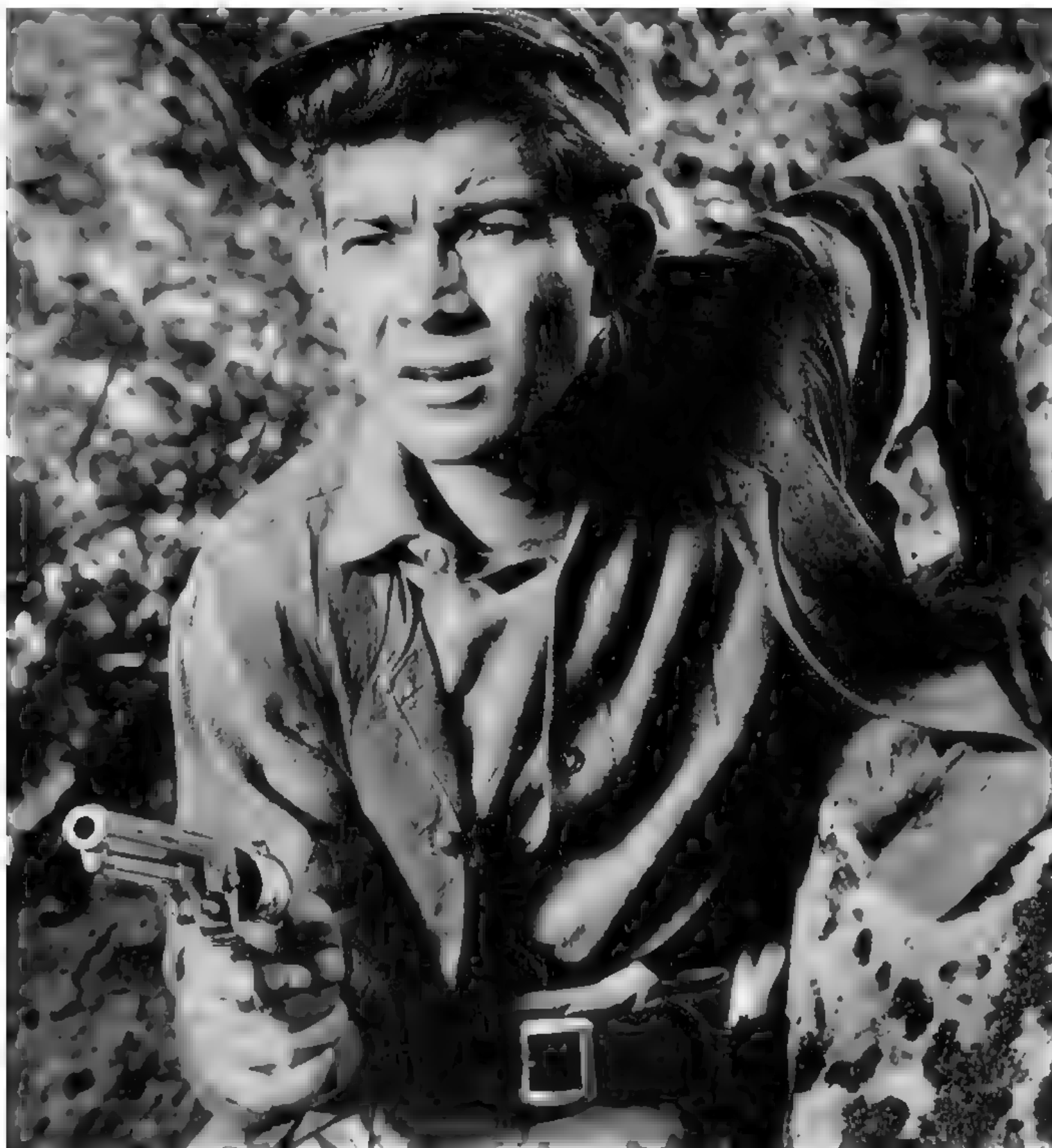










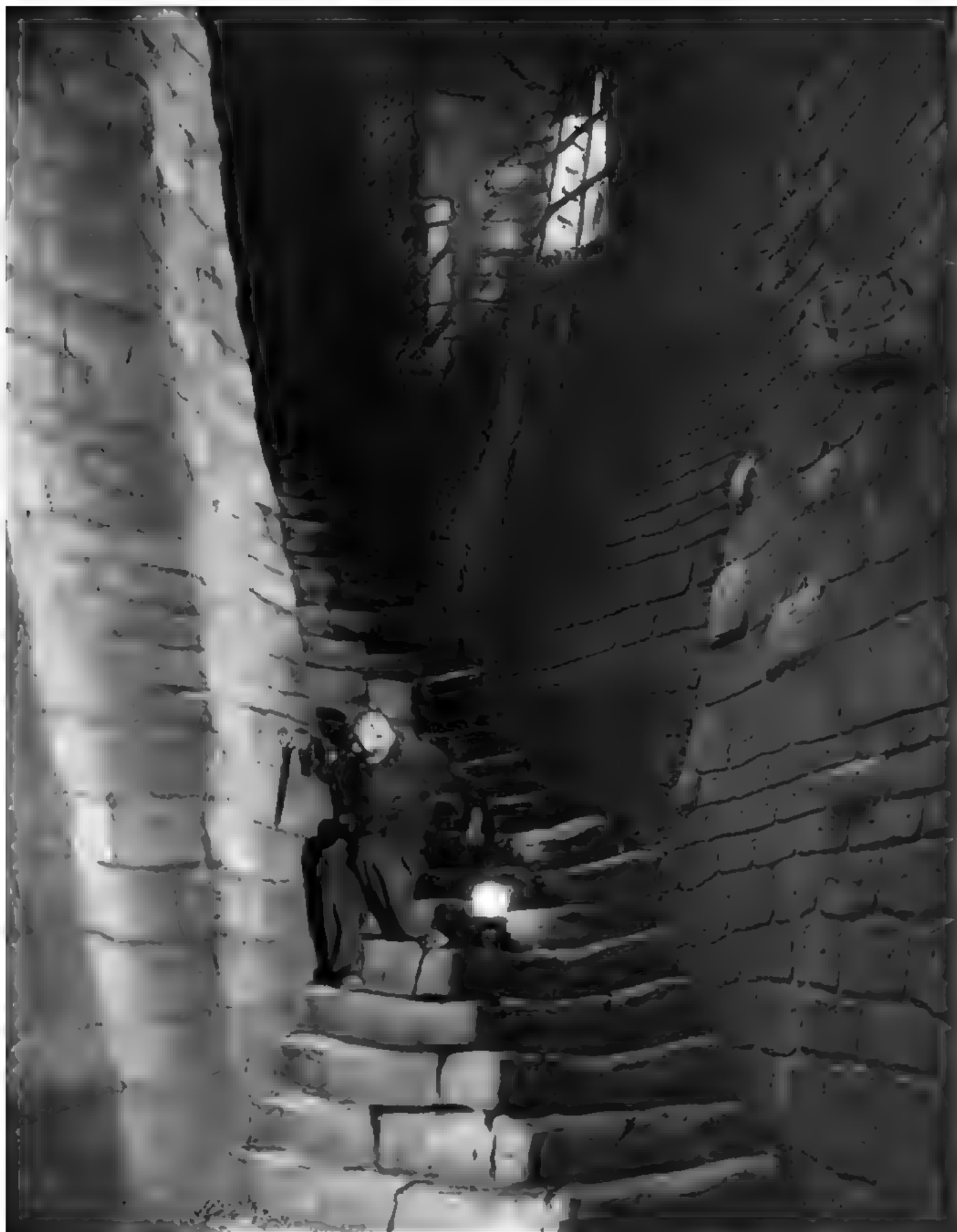


























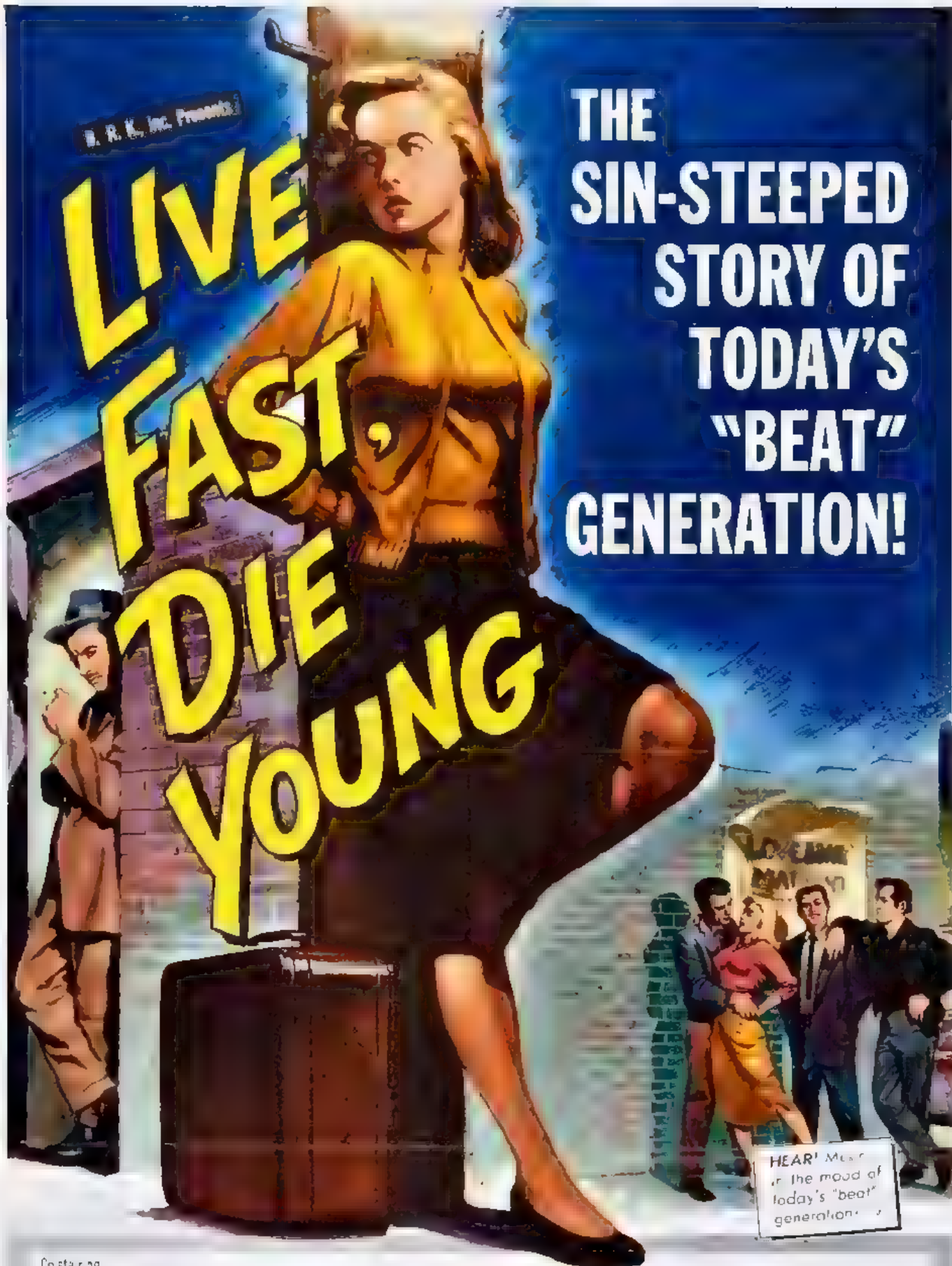




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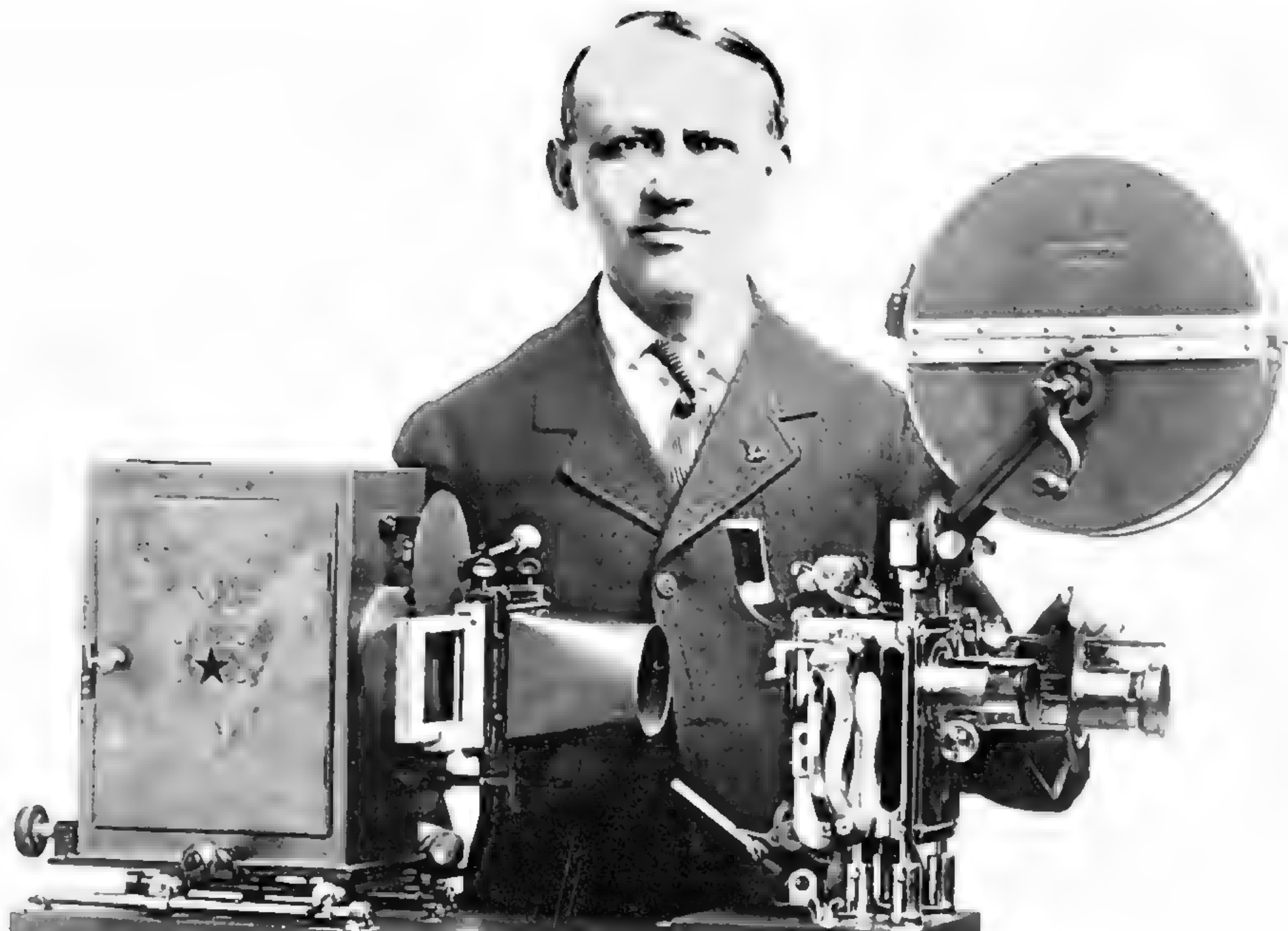
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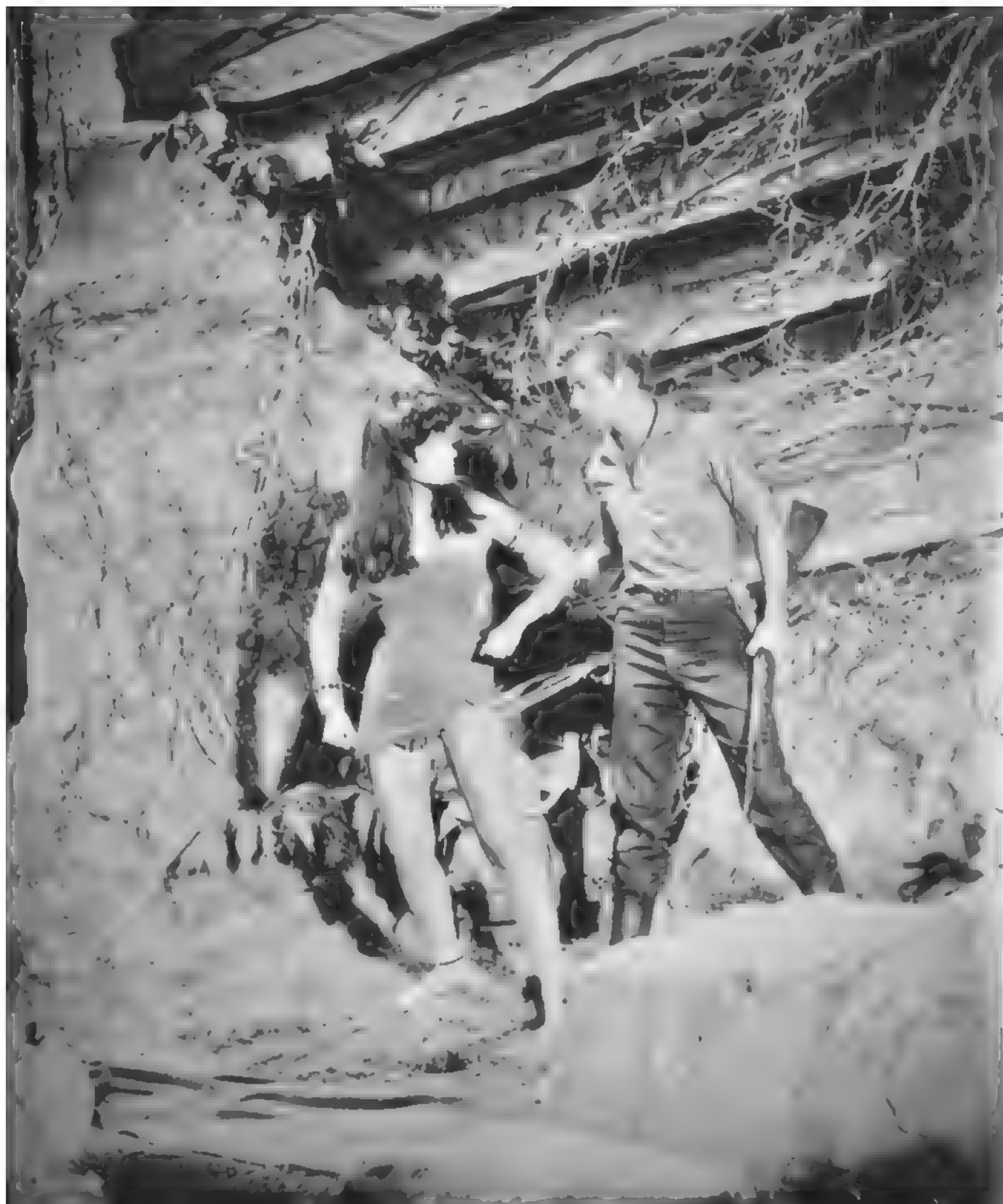














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